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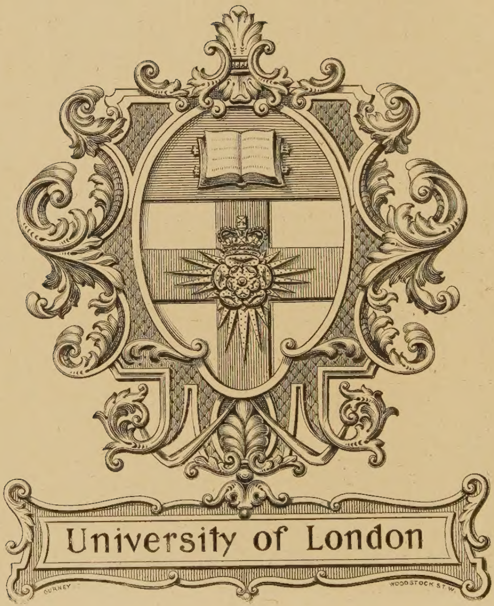

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SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—Civil Service Estimates—

(In the Committee.)

Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,978, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—Committee—*continued.*

will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries of the Officers and Attendants of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and other Expenses" 473

After short debate, *Moved,* "That Item A—for Salaries—be reduced by £829, for the Salary of the Private Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant and his Clerks,"—(*Mr. Dillon* :)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 60, Noes 115; Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 436.) [5.35 P.M.]

Original Question again proposed 499

Moved, "That Item C—£789, Salaries and Allowances, Chapel—be omitted from the proposed Vote,"—(*Mr. Handel Cossham* :)—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed 507

Moved, "That Item E—Incidental Expenses, Office of Arms, £60—be omitted from the proposed Vote,"—(*Mr. Molloy* :)—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed 509

After short debate, *Moved,* "That Item F—for Queen's Plates—be omitted from the proposed Vote,"—(*Mr. Biggar* :)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 23, Noes 116; Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 437.) [8 P.M.]

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £25,967, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in Dublin and London, and Subordinate Departments" 517

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £23,967, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Mr. T. M. Healy* :)—After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 52, Noes 113; Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 438.) [10.45 P.M.]

Original Question again proposed 565

After debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Hunter* :)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 614

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Clancy* :)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee also report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

Charity Commissioners (Officers) Bill [Bill 362]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" 626

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *considered* in Committee:—After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday.*

Tramways (War Department) Bill [Bill 246]—COMMITTEE [ADJOURNED DEBATE]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [3rd August], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (for Committee on the Tramways (War Department) Bill:—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 634

Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *considered* in Committee:—After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.* [3.0.]

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LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 635

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SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £25,967, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in Dublin and London and Subordinate Departments" 636

After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 110, Noes 55; Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 439.) [3.40 P.M.]

(2.) £1,145, to complete the sum for the Charitable Donations and Bequests Office, Ireland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £104,809, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board in Ireland, including various Grants in Aid of Local Taxation" 690

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

(3.) £3,456, to complete the sum for the Record Office, Ireland.

(4.) £9,126, to complete the sum for the Registrar General's Office, Ireland.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 699

(5.) £12,047, to complete the sum for the Valuation and Boundary Survey, Ireland. —After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 714

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

QUESTIONS.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL—Questions, Colonel Nolan, Mr. Mason; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 716

[5.55.]

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Questions, Mr. Dillon; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) .. 749

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Dillon*:)—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 61, Noes 97; Majority 36.—(Div. List, No. 440.) [7.20 P.M.]

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £104,809, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board in Ireland, including various Grants in Aid of Local Taxation" 786

After long debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £23,751, to complete the sum for the Public Works Office, Ireland.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 849

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(3.) £785, to complete the sum for the Admiralty Court Registry, Ireland.

(4.) £1,388, to complete the sum for the Registry of Judgments, Ireland.

(5.) £3,630, to complete the sum for the Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum, Ireland.

Moved, "That the Chairman do report the Resolutions to the House,"—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(6.) £114,662, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Ireland.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 881

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SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £38,580, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, of Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland, including certain Allowances under the Act 15 and 16 Vic. c. 83" 922
After long debate, *Moved*, "That Item E—£2,000, Fees to Law Officers—be reduced by the sum of £1,000,"—(*Mr. Tuite*:)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 49, Noes 116; Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 441.) [11.5 P.M.]
After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to*.
(2.) £47,387, to complete the sum for the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1012
(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,140, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Incidental Expenses of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland" 1018

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—Committee—*continued.*

After short debate, *Moved,* "That a sum, not exceeding £4,140, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Mr. Sexton*;)—After further short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 47, Noes 112; Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 442.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.* [12.30 A.M.]

(4.) £9,266, to complete the sum for Registry of Deeds, Ireland.

(5.) £73,028 (including a Supplementary sum of £37,575), to complete the sum for the Irish Land Commission.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1027

(6.) £85,000, to complete the sum for the Dublin Metropolitan Police.

(7.) £83,050, to complete the sum for Prisons, Ireland.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1042

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [1st September] *reported* 1065

First Five Resolutions *agreed to.*

Sixth Resolution read a second time.

After short debate, Amendment proposed, to leave out "£114,662," in order to insert "111,662,"—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Question, "That '£114,662' stand part of the Resolution," put, and *negatived*:—"£111,662" *inserted.*

Resolution, as amended, *agreed to.*

Charity Commissioners (Officers) Bill [Bill 362]—

Bill, as amended, *considered* 1066

After short debate, Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE (SATURDAY)—

Resolved, That the Sitting of the House on Saturday be held subject to the Standing Orders that regulate the Sitting of the House on Wednesdays.—(*Mr. Jackson.*) [3.15.]

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Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Bill [Bill 383]—

Bill, as amended, *considered* 1072

After debate, Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [2nd September] *reported* 1125

First Resolution *postponed* till *Monday* next:—Subsequent Resolutions *agreed to.* [5.55.]

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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — STARVING PUPILS IN ELEMENTARY BOARD SCHOOLS—Question, Colonel Eyre; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 1136

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—DISMISSAL OF WALTER STEWART FROM THE RENFREWSHIRE POLICE FORCE—Question, Mr. D. Crawford; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1136

POST OFFICE—MEMORIAL OF SORTERS OF THE LONDON DISTRICT—Question, Mr. J. Rowlands; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1138

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Sale of Food and Drugs Act—Importation of Adulterated Yeast—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. Long) 1138

Board of Trade (Railway Department)—Accidents on the Midland Railway—Question, Mr. Channing; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) 1138

Licensing Acts—The Workington Licensing Magistrates—Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1139

Army Medical Department—Rank and Position of Medical Officers—Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1141

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Major Lidwell, Dromard House, Co. Tipperary—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1142

Law and Justice (Ireland)—Land and Quarter Sessions at Granard—Question, Mr. Carew; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1143

Emigration (Scotland)—Assisted Emigration from the Highlands—Question, Mr. A. Sutherland; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1143

Law and Justice (Scotland)—Sequestrations of Mr. J. M. Russell—Question, Mr. Hunter; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1144

Rules and Orders of the House—Divisions—Question, Mr. Cobb; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 1144

Labourers' Allotments Bill—Questions, Mr. Cobb, Mr. Channing; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 1144

Public Business—Questions, Mr. Woodall, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1144

Evictions (Ireland)—Evictions at Herbertstown, Co. Limerick—Death of Mrs. Moloney—Question, Mr. Finucane; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1145

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—Prosecution of Mr. John Hayden—Question, Mr. Tuite; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) 1145

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—Civil Service Estimates—

(In the Committee.)

Class III.—Law and Justice.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £60,854, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers of the City of Dublin" 1146

After long debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 109, Noes 35; Majority 74.—(Div. List, No. 450.) [9.40 p.m.]

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £424,051, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland" 1224

After debate, Vote *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—Committee—*continued.*

(3.) £1,115, to complete the sum for the Teachers' Pension Office, Ireland.

(4.) £420, to complete the sum for the Endowed Schools Commissioners, Ireland.—Vote *agreed to* 1269

(5.) £1,201, to complete the sum for the National Gallery of Ireland.

(6.) £8,028, to complete the sum for the Queen's Colleges, Ireland.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1269

(7.) £959, to complete the sum for the Royal Irish Academy.

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

(8.) £1,800, to complete the sum for Pauper Lunatics, Ireland.

(9.) £6,658, to complete the sum for Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland.

(10.) £1,535, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland.

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(11.) £2,230, for Royal University (Ireland) Buildings.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1270

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(12.) £50,000, for Public Works and Industries (Ireland) (Special Grant).

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Labourers' Allotments Bill [Bill 329]—

Bill, as amended, *considered* 1271

After debate, *Moved,* "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Ritchie:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

Deeds of Arrangement (No. 2) Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 381]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 1326

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill *considered* in Committee:—Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

Sheriffs (Consolidation) Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 262]—

Order for Committee read:—*Moved,* "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair,"—(*Mr. Attorney General*) 1332

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Conybeare:*)—Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 25, Noes 79; Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 455.) [4.5 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed:—*Moved,* "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Sexton:*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed:—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill [Bill 358]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 29th August*] 1332

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

MOTION.

Vacant Grounds (Nuisances Prevention) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Lawson, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Howell, Mr. James Rowlands*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 388] .. 1333

[4.30 A.M.]

LORDS, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6.

Page

Duration of Speeches in Parliament Bill (No. 97)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Lord Denman*) .. 1333

Amendment *moved,* to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the Motion ("this day three months,")—(*The Viscount Cross:*)—On Question? That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion, *resolved* in the *negative*:—Bill to be read 2ª *this day three months.* [5.0]

COMMONS, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6.

QUESTIONS.

IMMIGRATION OF DESTITUTE ALIENS, 1886—Question, Mr. Webster; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) 1336

UNITED STATES—REFUSAL OF DESTITUTE ALIENS—Question, Captain Colomb; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) 1336

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS—ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL, HAMMERSMITH—Question, Mr. Lawson; Answer, The Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) 1337

METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE—ACTING SERGEANTS—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1337

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS—THE POLLING DISTRICT OF GREAT SANGHALL—Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1338

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS, 1883 AND 1885—LURGAN BOARD OF GUARDIANS—Question, Mr. Macartney; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1338

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS—KILBRIDE DIVISION OF RATHMINES UNION—Question, Mr. Harris; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1339

BOARD OF TRADE (RAILWAY DEPARTMENT) — BROMLEY LEVEL CROSSING (LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY)—Question, Mr. Wootton Isaacson; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) 1340

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—CORK AND MACROOM RAILWAY COMPANY—CONTRACT FOR CONVEYANCE OF MAILS—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1340

PUBLIC HEALTH—METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD—THE SOUTH WESTERN HOSPITAL (STOCKWELL)—Questions, The Marquess of Carmarthen, Mr. Isaacs; Answers, The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) 1341

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—MR. SHIRLEY'S ESTATE, CARRICKMACROSS, CO. MONAGHAN—Question, Mr. P. O'Brien; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1342

WAR OFFICE—ARMY CONTRACTS—CONTRACT FOR SPONGES—Questions, Mr. Hanbury; Answers, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Northcote) 1343

EXCISE—SEIZURE OF TOBACCO ON BOARD THE "CITY OF BRISTOL" AT BELFAST—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1344

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS CLERK, CO. SLIGO—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1345

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LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE PICTURES AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY—REMOVAL OF VARNISH—Question, Mr. Lafone; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1346

ITALY—DUTIES ON PIG IRON—CONTINUANCE OF THE GERMAN AND ITALIAN TREATY—Question, Mr. Mason; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1347

BULGARIA—MISSION OF GENERAL ERNROTH TO SOFIA—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1348

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—EVICTIONS AT TANG—PROSECUTIONS—Questions, Mr. D. Sullivan, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) 1348

EVICTIONS (SCOTLAND)—EVICTION AT CAIRNS ABERLOUR—Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. 1349

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SCOTLAND—THE WESTERN ISLES—LOCHMADDY, UIST—Question, Dr. Clark; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) .. 1350

BURIAL ACTS—THE BATTERSEA BURIAL BOARD—THE ROSE HILL CEMETERY—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1350

WAR OFFICE—REGIMENTAL BANDS AT PUBLIC MEETINGS—Questions, Dr. Tindal Robertson, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1351

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—INTIMIDATION—LISTOWEL PETTY SESSIONS, CO. KERRY—Question, Captain Colomb; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1351

ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE (INDIA)—HALF-STAFF ALLOWANCES—Question, Sir Walter Foster; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1352

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CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—"BOYCOTTING" IN THE QUEEN'S COUNTY—Question, Mr. W. A. Macdonald; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1354

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ADMIRALTY—DOCKYARDS—DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN AT DEVONPORT DOCKYARD—Questions, Sir John Puleston, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1356

Admiralty (Ships, &c.)—Ships Built by Contract—Refusal of the "Australia" and others—Question, Sir John Puleston; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) .. 1357

Royal Irish Constabulary—Charge against the Sergeant of Police Station at Pike, Ballingarry, Co. Tipperary—Questions, Mr. Gilhooly, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1358

Tithe Commutation Acts—Incidence of Charge—Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) .. 1359

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Theatres—Official Surveys—Burning of the Exeter Theatre—Questions, Sir John Puleston, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1360

Royal Irish Constabulary—Alleged Brutality at Ballinasloe—Questions, Mr. Harris, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1362

Business of the House—Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1363

Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887—The Proclaimed Meeting in Clare—Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. E. Robertson, Mr. R. T. Reid; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson), The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) 1364

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—Civil Service Estimates—

(In the Committee.)

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

(1.) £441,500 (including a Supplementary sum of £256,000), to complete the sum for Disturnpiked and Main Roads, England and Wales.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1365

(2.) £60,000 (including a Supplementary sum of £35,000), to complete the sum for Disturnpiked and other Roads, Scotland.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1366

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

(3.) £213,392, to complete the sum for Public Education, Scotland.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1367

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £12,018, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for Grants to Scottish Universities" 1399

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £11,018, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Mr. Hunter*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided*: Ayes 31, Noes 105; Majority 74.—(Div. List, No. 456.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) £1,300, to complete the sum for the National Gallery, &c. Scotland.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1403

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CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(6.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £14,416, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, in aid of Colonial Local Revenue, and for the Salaries and Allowances of Governors, &c., and for other Charges connected with the Colonies, including Expenses incurred under 'The Pacific Islanders Protection Act, 1875'" .. 1404

Moved, "That Item A—West Coast of Africa Steamer—be reduced by the sum of £1,500,"—(*Sir George Campbell*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed 1406

Moved, "That Item C—Heligoland—be reduced by £1,000,"—(*Dr. Tanner*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed 1409

Moved, "That the Item M. 1—Salaries—be reduced by £250,"—(*Sir George Campbell*:)—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived*.

Original Question again proposed 1427

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(7.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £48,180, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for certain Charges connected with the Orange River Territory, the Transvaal, Zululand, Bechuanaland, the Island of St. Helena, and the High Commissioner for South Africa" 1431

After short debate, *Moved*, "That Item B—for Salaries—be reduced by £2,099,"—(*Sir George Campbell*:)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed 1432

Moved, "That Item B—Salaries, Transvaal—be reduced by £326, Compensation to Sir Theophilus Shepstone,"—(*Sir George Campbell*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed 1434

Moved, "That Item C—Salary, Zululand—be reduced by £150, part of the Allowance to the Governor of Natal, as Special Commissioner in Zululand,"—(*Sir George Campbell*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed 1442

Moved, "That Item E—Grant in Aid, British Bechuanaland—be reduced by £40,000,"—(*Sir George Campbell*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(8.) £1,000, to complete the sum for Cyprus, Grant in Aid.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1450

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

(9.) £246,082, to complete the sum for Superannuations and Retired Allowances.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1454

(10.) £11,800, to complete the sum for Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.

(11.) £470,000, to complete the sum for Pauper Lunatics, England.

(12.) £19,500, to complete the sum for Pauper Lunatics, Scotland.

(13.) £1,259, to complete the sum for Savings Banks and Friendly Societies Deficiency.

(14.) £982, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1454

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(15.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £19,055, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Incidental Expenses of Temporary Commissions and Committees, including Special Inquiries" 1455

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

(16.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,804, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for certain Miscellaneous Expenses" 1474

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—Committee—*continued.*

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £804, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Mr. Conybeare*:)—After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 23, Noes 116; Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 457.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(17.) £50, to complete the sum for the Adelaide Exhibition.

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

(18.) £651,848, to complete the sum for Customs.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1484

(19.) £1,413,879, to complete the sum for Inland Revenue.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1487

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(20.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £8,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, in respect to the preparation of Plans for the Erection of New Offices for the Admiralty and War Departments" 1488

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,500, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Mr. Dillwyn*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(21.) £4,000, to complete the sum for the Einburgh University Buildings.

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(22.) £2,000, to complete the sum for the Victoria University.—Vote *agreed to* .. 1493

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(23.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,069, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for repaying to the Civil Contingencies Fund certain Miscellaneous Advances" 1493

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,620, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Mr. Conybeare*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1502

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £5,289, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Mr. Conybeare*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 21, Noes 118; Majority 97.—(Div. List, No. 458.)

Original Question again proposed 1502

After short debate, *Moved*, "That a sum, not exceeding £5,869, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Mr. Sexton*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 15, Noes 117; Majority 102.—(Div. List, No. 459).

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [5th September] *reported* 1504

First Eleven Resolutions *agreed to.*

(12.) £50,000 (Execution of certain Public Works, and the promotion of certain Industries in Ireland.)

Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution:"—After short debate, *Moved*, "That the Question be now put,"—(*Mr. W. H. Smith*:)—Question put accordingly:—The House *divided;* Ayes 116, Noes 16; Majority 100.—(Div. List, No. 460.)

Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 115, Noes 16; Majority 99.—(Div. List, No. 461.)

Resolution *agreed to.*

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SUPPLY—REPORT—Postponed Resolution [2nd September] again read .. 1511

(I.) £38,508 (Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland, including certain Allowances under the Act 15 and 16 Vic. c. 83.)

Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 114, Noes 15; Majority 99.—(Div. List, No. 462.)

Resolution *agreed to.*

Deeds of Arrangement (No. 2) Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 381]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 5th September*] 1514

After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

Bankruptcy (Discharge and Closure) Bill [Bill 327]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1517

Committee report Progress; to sit again on *Thursday.*

Merchant Shipping (Miscellaneous) Bill [Bill 348]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1518

After short time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.* [4.50 A.M.]

LORDS, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7.

Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Bill (No. 251)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Viscount Cross*) .. 1522

After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

Labourers' Allotments Bill (No. 252)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*The Viscount Cross*) .. 1524

After short debate, Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

Truck Bill—

Commons Amendment to one of the Lords Amendments, and Reasons for disagreeing to certain of the Lords Amendments, and Commons consequential Amendment *considered* 1532

Commons Amendments *agreed to;* certain of the Amendments to which the Commons have disagreed *not insisted on;* some *insisted on*, and a consequential Amendment made to the Bill:—A Committee appointed to prepare Reasons to be offered to the Commons for the Lords insisting on certain of their Amendments; the Committee to meet *forthwith.*

Report from the Committee of the Reasons to be offered to the Commons for the Lords insisting on certain of their Amendments; read, and *agreed to;* and a message sent to the Commons to return the said Bill with an Amendment and Reasons. [5.30.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—NAVY ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

(I.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,207,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Naval Stores for Building, Repairing, and Outfitting the Fleet and Coast Guard, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888" .. 1534

Supply—Navy Estimates—Committee—*continued.*

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,202,000, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre :*)—After debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1562

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,206,000, be granted for the said Services," (*Mr. Mason :*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1568

After short debate, *Moved,* "That a sum, not exceeding £1,202,000, be granted for the said Services,"—(*Sir George Campbell :*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1573

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,911,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Machinery and Ships built by Contract, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888" 1578

Moved, "That Item N—Royal Reserve of Merchant Cruisers—be reduced by the sum of £10,000,"—(*Captain Colomb :*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1598

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £211,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expenses of the Admiralty Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888" 1599

After short debate, *Moved,* "That Item A—Salaries—be reduced by £1,000,"—(*Dr. Tanner :*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1607

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(4.) £204,900, for the Coast Guard Service and Royal Naval Reserves, &c.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1609

(5.) £108,800, for the Scientific Branch.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £553,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of New Works, Buildings, Yard Machinery and Repairs, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888" 1616

After short debate, *Moved,* "That Item A be reduced by the sum of £1,000, Works at Haulbowline,"—(*Dr. Tanner :*) — Question put: — The Committee *divided;* Ayes 24, Noes 94; Majority 70.—(Div. List, No. 464.) [5.40 P.M.]

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow ;* Committee also report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

QUESTION.

Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill—Question, Mr. Mason; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1622

[5.50.]

LORDS, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8.

Army—Supply of Horses for Military Purposes—Question, Lord Clinton; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Lord Harris) 1623

Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Bill (No. 251)—

House in Committee (according to order) 1627

Amendments made; the Report thereof to be received *To-morrow,* and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.

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Labourers' Allotments Bill (No. 252)—
Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into Committee upon the said Bill,"—(*The Viscount Cross*) 1632
After short debate, Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee accordingly: Bill *reported*, without Amendments, and to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

Tramways (War Department) Bill (No. 255)—
House in Committee (according to order) 1634
Bill *reported* without Amendment; and to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

Women's Suffrage Bill—
Moved, "That the Bill be not further inserted in the list of Bills in progress printed with the Minutes of this House,"—(*The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos*) 1635
After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

GOVERNMENT OF MALTA—Question, Earl De La Warr; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Earl of Onslow) .. 1637

AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION—Petion presented, Earl De La Warr .. 1638
Petition read, and ordered to lie on the Table. [6.0.]

COMMONS, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8.

QUESTIONS.

BOARD OF TRADE (RAILWAY DEPARTMENT)—LEVEL CROSSINGS—Questions, Mr. H. Gardner; Answers, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) 1640
NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—MR. QUINN, HEAD MASTER OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOL, TANDRAGEE — Question, Sir James Corry; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1641
IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE "BLUE BOOKS"—LEASEHOLDERS' RENT FIXTURES—Question, Mr. D. Sullivan; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1641
LAND COMMISSION COURTS—PRODUCTION OF CERTIFICATES OF VALUATION—Question, Mr. D. Sullivan; ANSWER, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1641
ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—"THE QUEEN *v.* SUB-INSPECTOR SOMERVILLE AND CONSTABLE WARD"—Question, Mr. Blane; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) 1642
BOARD OF WORKS—STOWMARKET COUNTY COURT—Question, Mr. Blane; Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Plunket) .. 1643
MOROCCO—THE SLAVE TRADE—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) .. 1643
METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—DANGEROUS CONDITION OF THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY-LE-STRAND—Questions, Sir George Campbell; Answers, Mr. Tatton Egerton 1644
BURIAL ACTS — PROPOSED CEMETERIES IN EAST HAM—Questions, Major Banes; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1645
SOUTH AFRICA — ANNEXATION OF ZULULAND — Question, Commander Bethell; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) 1645
WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—ISSUE OF DEFECTIVE AMMUNITION POUCHES—Question, General Fraser; Answer, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Northcote) 1646

War Office (Auxiliary Forces)—Militia Valise Equipment—Question, General Fraser; Answer, The Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. Northcote) 1647

Scotland — Emigration from the Highlands — Questions, Mr. A. Sutherland; Answers, The Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) 1647

War Office—Ridingmasters and Quartermasters—Promotion from the Ranks—Question, Mr. Bradlaugh; Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) 1648

Poor Law (Ireland)—Relieving Officers of the Belfast Poor Law Union—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1649

The Currency—The New Coinage—Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1649

Excise—The Tobacco Duties—Excess of Moisture—Questions, Mr. Nolan, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) 1650

The Thames Conservancy Board—Representation in this House—Question, Mr. Gedge; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) 1651

Royal Irish Constabulary—Removal of a Banner, Cappamore, Co. Limerick — Question, Mr. Finucane; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1651

Army — Military Colleges and Asylums (Ireland) — Comparative Salaries—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) 1652

Inland Revenue Department—Assistants of Excise—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) .. 1653

Prisons (England and Wales)—Lady Visitors to Female Prisoners—Question, Sir Richard Temple; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1654

North Sea Fisheries—Fishermen Pilots—Question, Sir Savile Crossley; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) .. 1655

North Sea Fisheries—The Protection Cruisers—Question, Sir Savile Crossley; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) 1655

North Sea Fisheries—Damages by Belgian Trawlers—Question, Sir Savile Crossley; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1656

North Sea Fisheries — The Ostend Rioters — Question, Sir Savile Crossley; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1656

India (Bombay)—Charges against Mr. G. H. D. Wilson, of the Covenanted Civil Service—Questions, Mr. Pickersgill; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1657

Crime and Outrage (Ireland)—Attack on a Train, Killylea Station, Co. Armagh — Question, Mr. Blane; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1659

War Office—Unclaimed Effects of Deceased Soldiers—Question, Mr. Hunter; Answer, The Financial Secretary, War Department (Mr. Brodrick) 1660

Civil Service Writers—Promotion to Lower Division Clerkships—Question, Sir John Puleston; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1660

Venezuela — Outrages on British Subjects and Shipping — The "Henrietta" and "Josephine"—Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1661

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PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—BALLYCOTTON HARBOUR—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) .. 1662

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CHARGE AGAINST A POLICE SERGEANT, PIKE, BALLINGARRY, Co. TIPPERARY—Question, Dr. Fox; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) .. 1663

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE GREENWICH TIME GUN AT CORK—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) .. 1663

CENTRAL ASIA—THE DELIMITATION OF THE AFGHAN FRONTIER—Question, Dr. Tanner; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1664

HOME OFFICE—INCORPORATION OF HASLINGDEN—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) 1664

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) .. 1665

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—RETIREMENT OF MR. W. AHERN, NORTHERN POSTAL DIVISION—Questions, Mr. H. Campbell, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Postmaster General (Mr. Raikes) 1665

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BARROW——Question, Mr. W. A. Macdonald; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1666

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE—"CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS, REPAYMENTS TO COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS"—Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) 1667

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—DISTURBANCES AT BALLINASLOE—Questions, Dr. Fox, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1667

EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — PROCEEDINGS ON THE SHIRLEY ESTATE, Co. MONAGHAN—Question, Mr. P. O'Brien; Answer, The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) 1668

TITHE—COMMUTATION AND REDEMPTION OF TITHE—A ROYAL COMMISSION—COLLECTION OF TITHE RENT-CHARGE—Questions, Mr. H. Gardner, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1669

WAR OFFICE—PRESENTATION OF COLOURS TO THE 5TH BATTALION, ROYAL MUNSTER FUSILIERS — RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES—Questions, Colonel Sandys, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope), Mr. Speaker 1670

LOCAL TAXATION RETURNS, SCOTLAND—Question, General Sir George Balfour; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1671

AFGHANISTAN—AYOUB KHAN—Question, Sir Algernon Borthwick; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1672

THE TRUCK BILL—THE WAGE CLAUSES—Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1672

THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC—SAMOA — Questions, Mr. A. M'Arthur, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) 1672

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—VALUATION OF LANDS (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) 1673

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—NAVY ESTIMATES—

(In the Committee.)

(1.) £553,300, New Works, Buildings, Yard Machinery, and Repairs.

(2.) £56,100, Medicines and Medical Stores.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1674

(3.) £11,500, Martial Law, &c.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £186,100, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of various Miscellaneous Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888" 1678

After short debate, *Moved,* "That Item Z—Miscellaneous Payments and Allowances —be reduced by the sum of £3,000,"—(*Mr. Conybeare*:)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) £801,400, Half-Pay, Reserved Half-Pay, and Retired Pay to Officers of the Navy and Marines.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1693

(6.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £906,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Military Pensions and Allowances, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888" 1697

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £905,000, be granted for the said Services,"— (*Mr. Sexton*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1704

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(7.) £328,800, Civil Pensions and Allowances.

(8.) £165,100, Extra Estimate for Services not Naval.—Freight, &c. on account of the Army Department.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1705

ARMY ESTIMATES.

(9.) £258,100, War Office.—After debate, Vote *agreed to* 1708

(10.) £76,000, Yeomanry Cavalry.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1737

(11.) £655,000, Volunteer Corps.

(12.) £448,000, Army Reserve Force.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1737

(13.) £542,700, Commissariat, Transport, and Ordnance Store Establishments.— After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1743

(14.) £830,000, Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies.

(15.) £2,943,500, Supply, Manufacture, and Repair of Warlike Stores.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1745

(16.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £862,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for superintending Establishment of, and Expenditure for, Engineering Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888" 1747

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £855,900, be granted for the said Services,"— (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*:)—After short debate, Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(17.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £130,600, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Establishments for Military Education, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888" 1759

Moved, "That a sum, not exceeding £130,350, be granted for the said Services,"— (*Mr. Sexton*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1761

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(18.) £48,200, Miscellaneous Effective Services.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1765

(19.) £16,800, Rewards for Distinguished Services.

(20.) £76,000, Half-Pay.

(21.) £127,600, Widows' Pensions, &c.

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SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES—Committee—*continued.*

(22.) £15,200, Pensions for Wounds.

(23.) £31,400, Chelsea and Kilmainham Hospitals.—Vote *agreed to* .. 1766

(24.) £1,358,300, Out-Pensions.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* .. 1767

(25.) £183,300, Superannuation Allowances.

(26.) £47,100, Retired Allowances, &c. to Officers of the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteer Forces.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee—

(In the Committee.)

Moved, "That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, the sum of £34,242,209 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom" 1769

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES—REPORT—

Resolutions [7th September] *reported* 1770

First Three Resolutions *agreed to.*

Fourth Resolution read a second time:—After short debate, Resolution *agreed to.*

Remaining Resolution *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—REPORT—

Resolutions [6th September] *reported* 1770

First Eight Resolutions *agreed to.*

Ninth Resolution read a second time 1771

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£246,082," and insert "£246,023,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That '£246,082' stand part of the Resolution:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 109, Noes 25; Majority 84. [12.15 P.M.]

Division List, Ayes and Noes 1784

Resolution *agreed to.*

Resolutions 10 to 17 *agreed to.*

Resolution 18—

£651,848, (Salaries and Expenses of the Customs Department).

Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution" 1785

After short debate, Amendment proposed, to leave out "£651,848," and insert "£651,815,"—(*Mr. Pickersgill:*)—Question proposed, "That '£651,848,' stand part of the Resolution:"—After further short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 110, Noes 17; Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 466.) [1.10 A.M.]

Resolution *agreed to.*

Resolution 19 read a second time:—After short debate, Resolution *agreed to.*

Resolutions 20 to 22 *agreed to.*

Resolution 23—

£6,069 (Repaying to the Civil Contingencies Fund certain Miscellaneous Advances).

Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution" 1808

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—REPORT—*continued.*
Amendment proposed, to leave out "£6,069," and insert "£5,969,"—(*Mr. Sexton*:)—Question proposed, "That '£6,069' stand part of the Resolution:"—After short debate, Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Resolution *agreed to.*

Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill [Bill 354]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Jackson*) .. 1810
After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill [Bill 358]—
Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 5th September*] 1817
After some time spent therein, Bill *reported*; as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

Municipal Regulation (Constabulary, &c.) (Belfast) (*re-committed*) **Bill** [Bill 291]—
Order for Committee read:—*Moved*, "That the Order be discharged" .. 1834
Question put, and *agreed to*:—Order *discharged*:—Bill *withdrawn.*

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE, 1885-6—ACCOUNTS *considered* in Committee 1834
After short debate, Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Vacant Grounds (Nuisances Prevention) Bill [Bill 388]—
Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. J. Rowlands*) 1842
Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Copyhold Enfranchisement Bill [*Lords*] [Bill 359]—
Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 1*st September*] 1843
After short time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

ADJOURNMENT—
Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" 1850
Question put, and *agreed to.* [4.30 A.M.]

COMMONS.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 26.

County of Carlow—James Patrick O'Gorman Mahon, esquire, commonly called The O'Gorman Mahon.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1.

County of Huntingdon (*Northern or Ramsey Division*)—Ailwyn Edward Fellowes, esquire.

HANSARD'S
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

SECOND SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 5 AUGUST, 1886, IN THE FIFTIETH
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

ELEVENTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1887.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 26th August, 1887.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Savings Banks and Government Annuities* (243); Sheriff of Lanarkshire (244).

Committee—Report—Public Libraries (Scotland) Acts Amendment * (238).

Report—Trustee Savings Banks * (245).

SHERIFF OF LANARKSHIRE BILL.

(*The Marquess of Lothian.*)

(NO. 244.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of LOTHIAN), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that when the late Sheriff Clark, who was Sheriff-Principal of Lanarkshire, became ill, Mr. Berry was appointed *interim* Sheriff, being eligible for that appointment. Upon the death of Sheriff Clark, the *interim* Sheriff was appointed to the place of Sheriff Principal; but this was done by an oversight, as he was not eligible. The appointment, however, had given great satisfaction in Lanarkshire, and the object of the present Bill was to confirm that appointment.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª." (*The Marquess of Lothian.*)

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* next.

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL—A POINT OF ORDER.—QUESTION.

LORD DENMAN said, he was interested in two Bills on this subject which were on their Lordships' Order Book, and he rose to ask for instructions as to which of them he might be allowed to place on the Paper for Monday or

Tuesday next. The first of those Bills, which was very likely to be opposed in the beginning of the Session in both Houses of Parliament, was put off for six months on the Motion of the Prime Minister. The six calendar months happened to expire on a Sunday, and although he requested the Clerk of Parliaments, in the circumstances, to put the Bill down on Monday or Tuesday, he declined to do so, saying that when the Reform Bill was put off to a certain day, it was held that the consideration of the Bill must be resumed on that day at the end of three lunar months, from the 12th of March to the 4th of June. In the circumstances, he wished to know which of the two Bills he might be allowed to proceed with.

The PRIME MINISTER and SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY): I shall not occupy your Lordships' time very long at this hour in replying to this Question. As far as I am concerned, I would point out to the noble Lord, that with regard to the second Bill, the order has been discharged, and my impression is that the Bill is dead, and cannot be allowed to go forward; but his first Bill is still alive, and if he chooses to push it forward, I imagine he is perfectly in Order in doing so.

Lord DENMAN said, he was extremely obliged, and would put it down for second reading on Tuesday next, on which day Bills take precedence of Motions.

House adjourned at a quarter before Five o'clock, to Tuesday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 26th August, 1887.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—James Patrick O'Gorman Mahon, esquire, commonly called The O'Gorman Mahon, *for* the County of Carlow.

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Suitors' Relief * [386].

Considered as amended—Secretary for Scotland Act (1885) Amendment * [385], *Further Proceeding deferred.*

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Lunacy Districts (Scotland) * [318], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

WAR OFFICE — INTERFERENCE OF OFFICERS IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS—MAJOR JELF, R.E.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in connection with the North Hants election, which took place on the 18th of July last, the Assistant Adjutant General issued a Divisional Order, dated 11th July, calling the attention of officers and men to the Act 10 & 11 *Vict.* c. 21, s. 2, stating, in the words of it—

> "That no soldier will be allowed out of the precincts of the camp or to either the town of Aldershot on those days" —

(the day of nomination and election)—

> "unless on guard, picket, or necessary military duty, or to give his vote at the election on the latter day, and any soldier allowed to go out for any such purpose shall return to camp with all convenient speed, as soon as the duty on which he has gone is completed or vote tendered;"

whether information has reached him that Lieutenant-Colonel Jelf, an officer of Engineers, then stationed at Aldershot, on the day of the said election drove about the town of Aldershot taking voters to the poll, and that he was also seen at another polling station, Farnborough, on that day; and, whether, if these statements are found to be correct, he will state whether Major Jelf was justified in so acting, having regard to the order of the Assistant Adjutant General?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Lieutenant-Colonel Jelf is at the present moment absent from England upon leave. But, so far as I can ascertain, he did drive about Aldershot on the day in question in plain clothes, interesting himself in the election. I am not prepared to deprive officers of the Army of their civil rights when out of uniform.

Subsequently,

Mr. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) said, he desired to ask a question arising out of the very important answer which had been given by the Secretary of State for War, and which was to the effect that officers would practically be allowed to canvass in places where they were stationed. Would the same privilege be granted to non-commissioned officers and to privates?

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he must ask the right hon. Gentleman to give Notice of that Question; but, with all deference to his high authority, it seemed to him to involve a practical impossibility.

SCOTLAND — CROFTERS IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS—POLICE CONSTABLE JOHN MacIVER.

DR. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he is aware that a remonstrance was sent to the Chief Constable at Dingwall on 1st September, 1886, signed by seven of the crofters at Lochgarrabhinch (or Achmore), Uig, Lewis, as to the conduct of Police Constable John MacIver stationed there, complaining that the most of his time was spent in the rearing of sheep on the moor for which these crofters pay rent, and in worrying these crofters' sheep by his sheep dog; whether an inquiry was made as to the truth of these allegations, and with what results; and, whether the estate officials have asserted that MacIver has no right to have any sheep on these lands?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Due inquiry was made in September last into the allegations made in the hon. Member's Question, and they were found to be groundless. The estate officials have made no such assertion as is contained in the last paragraph.

METROPOLITAN BUILDINGS ACT — SPACE AND AIR—NEW BUILDINGS, OXFORD.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether, since he has interfered to secure sufficient space and air for new buildings at Oxford, he will intervene in like manner in the Metropolis; whether he is aware that the recently built large houses in Palace Gate and De Vere Gardens, Kensington, were allowed to be crowded together back to back with no more than shafts between those two streets; and, whether, in view of the fact that the supervision of all buildings in the Metropolis is entrusted to the Metropolitan Board alone, and that their functions are necessarily delegated to subordinates, who are allowed to take fees, he will consider, during the Recess, the propriety of introducing in English towns and the various local areas in the Metropolis some regular authority to supervise buildings, like the Dean of Guilds' Courts in Scotland?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, the area and spaces around houses in the Metropolis were regulated by statutory provisions conferred on the Metropolitan Board of Works, in regard to which the Local Government Board had no power to interfere, the Board of Works being practically independent in this matter. Of his own personal knowledge, he could confirm the hon. Gentleman's proposition respecting the new houses at Kensington. Urban Sanitary Authorities possessed all necessary powers in connection with the erection of buildings; and, beyond promising to bring the matter before the Metropolitan Board of Works, he could give no undertaking on the subject.

INDIA (BENGAL)—ILLEGAL FLOGGING IN BENGAL—THE PUNISHMENT OF FLOGGING.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the attention of the Secretary of State has been called to a recent case at a place called Meturpore, in Bengal, where a number of villagers who claimed a customary right of fishing in certain waters were, for attempting to exercise such rights, convicted of theft and punished with flogging by a European Magistrate and Civil Servant, who was, in consequence, severely censured by the High Court, and reduced in power and position by the Government; and, whether, in addition to the censure passed, the Secretary of State will further inquire into this case, and also generally into the practice of inflicting flogging as a punishment in India?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): The case referred to in the Question appears to have been adequately dealt with by the High Court and Government of Bengal, and the Secretary of State sees no reason for further inquiry. The then Secretary of State called attention to the subject of flogging in 1882, with the result of greatly diminishing the frequency of that punishment.

SCOTLAND—THE CROFTERS IN LEWIS—PAYMENT OF FEES TO THE LAND COMMISSION.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether complaints have reached him that the police constable stationed at Laxay, in the Island of Lewis, while on his regular rounds, particularly at the Kinloch Free Church, in presence of a number of the crofters, stated on his authority as an officer of the law that, notwithstanding the crofters had made application to the Land Commission in regular form, and had paid the Exchequer fee on their application, yet, before they would be allowed to open their mouth before the Land Commission in support of their application, they would each of them be forced to pay another sum of 12*s.*; and, what steps he proposes to take in the matter?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): It is not the case that the police constable, while going his rounds, made any statement on his authority, as officer of the law, such as is contained in the Question. The constable was attending a public sale of timber some months ago, and in casual conversation stated that he had heard a rumour to that effect.

"CENTRAL BORNEO COMPANY (LIMITED)"—GRANT OF CHARTER.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c) asked the Under Secretary of State for Forign Affairs, If the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to the prospectus of the "Central Borneo Company (Limited)," the promoters of which propose to take over and obtain concessions from the Sultan, the Pangerans, and others, and to manage or control them, and farther propose to obtain from the Crown a Charter enabling them to take and hold concessions in the Island of Borneo, and in any of the Islands of the Asiatic Archipelago, New Guinea, the Malay Peninsula, Siam, or Burmah; whether any encouragement has been given by the Government to the promoters, or any hope of a Charter has been held out to them; who is the first promoter, "the Honourable William Hood Treacher;" whether he is styled "honourable" in virtue of any official post; and, if so, whether he has asked, and obtained, permission to embark in this speculation; in case the Government has considered proposals for a Charter to this Company, what provision has been made for controlling them in foreign territories; and whether such a Charter would enable them to develop into a territorial Company, like the North Borneo Company, whose title they homologate?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government know nothing of the proposed Company, and have not been applied to for a Charter. Mr. Treacher has the local title of Honourable in Labuan, where he was formerly a Member of the Legislative Council, and subsequently the chief officer of the North Borneo Company.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE LOWER BANN.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What means he is taking to improve the drainage of the Lower Bann; and, whether he will at least have the wooden dock gates cleared away before the rainy season sets in?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Government had no means or power of touching the Bann navigation works; but when the Vote was taken they proposed to enter into negotiations with the Local Board on the subject.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—POST OFFICE TELEGRAPH STATION, KILNALECK, CO. CAVAN.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware there is a weekly market and monthly fair in Kilnaleck, County Cavan; and, whether, under the circumstances, he is prepared to make it a post office telegraph station?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, that the question of opening the Kilnaleck Post Office for the transaction of telegraph business was considered in May of this year, and it was estimated that the receipts would fall far short of the working expenses. The Memorialists were, therefore, informed that the office, as in other similar cases, could only be established under the guarantee of £39 for seven years.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES) —SURVEYORS' STATIONARY CLERKS.

Dr. R. MACDONALD (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true, as rumoured, that his promised inquiry into the grievances of the surveyors' stationary clerks, as regards rank, status, and pay, will result in only the allowance to about a third of their number of £10 or £20 additional subsistence pay, with, in a few cases, promotion from the second to the first class of sorting clerks and telegraphists; whether he is aware that it is intended to put still more arduous work on these men, hitherto performed by the surveyors' travelling staff; and, if so, what is the objection to classifying the stationary clerks as surveyors' clerks proper, putting them on the surveyors' establishment, and severing their nominal connection with offices at which they perform no duties whatever; and, whether any increased pay or prospects of promotion are to be held out to the large proportion of stationary clerks whose position and pay will not be affected as to the rumoured decision, their circumstances and work being identical with their fellow clerks now being slightly benefited?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I have recently considered the position and duties of the 41 stationary clerks referred to, and am about to make certain recommendations to the Treasury. I should not be, however, justified in recommending that the appointments should be converted into surveyors' clerkships. The effect of the proposed changes, if approved of by the Treasury, will unquestionably be to improve generally the positions of the stationary clerks; but I am not in a position to state what I have proposed.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—REMOVAL OF A LUNATIC FROM MAGHERAFELT WORKHOUSE.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that an inmate of Magherafelt Workhouse, named Frank Murphy, alleged to be an imbecile and harmless lunatic, was recently induced to leave that institution by a man named Henry Thompson, in the employment of Mr. Glover, the Returning Officer of Magherafelt Union, for the purpose of acting as an emergency man on a farm at Covick, near Draperstown, on the estate of a Mr. Devlin, and from which a widow named Kelly had been previously evicted; whether two policemen, who were engaged as a protection party to the alleged imbecile emergency man Murphy, have since been withdrawn; and, if so, was it in consequence of representations made by the police themselves, or for what other reason; and, whether the Local Government Board will cause an inquiry into the circumstances under which Murphy was removed from the custody of the Guardians?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the clerk of the union reported that an inmate named Frank Murphy, whom he stated to be neither an imbecile nor a harmless lunatic, took his discharge on the 11th August and returned on the 19th. He appeared to have acted as caretaker on the farm referred to. The police were withdrawn because the house was unfit for their occupation. The Local Government Board were not aware that any person induced Murphy to leave the workhouse. It was the rule that any pauper might leave the workhouse on three hours' notice.

MERCANTILE MARINE—USE OF OIL IN HEAVY SEAS.

Mr. HOARE (Norwich) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the successful experiments carried out on the North German Company's steamer *Main*, in the use of oil during the prevalence of heavy seas in the Atlantic; and, whether he would consider the advisability of making further experiments as to the use of oil in stormy weather at sea?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Board of Trade have not received any Report respecting the use of oil in the case referred to by the hon. Member; but a note is made in the Department of recorded cases that come under their notice. The Board have not, however, any funds at their disposal for the purpose of making experiments.

PUBLIC HEALTH ORDINANCE, HONG KONG — WITHDRAWAL OF PRIVILEGES FROM CHINESE MERCHANTS.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is a fact, as stated by a correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, that—

> "The legislation of 1877, permitting Chinese merchants to own and occupy land and houses in the best business parts of the City of Victoria, Hong Kong, is being altered, and that the Chinese are to be driven out of those districts, and that an Ordinance for this purpose has been read a first time before the Legislative Council of Hong Kong;"

and, whether, before approving of this Ordinance, he will take steps to ascertain to what extent it will, by hampering the business of our Chinese customers, also prove detrimental to British trade?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): I presume that the hon. Member referred to the Public Health Ordinance now before the Legislative Council of Hong Kong. There is, of course, no desire to prevent Chinese or any other persons from occupying the best business parts of Victoria, or to oust them from those districts, or to hamper them in their business. But sanitary questions have long been neglected in Hong Kong; and the Public Health Ordinance is designed to enforce certain Rules for preventing overcrowding and securing other Sanitary Rules, which are necessary in any large town, and especially in such a climate as that of Hong Kong. The last newspaper reports from Hong Kong state that the clauses to which objection had been principally taken have been removed from the Health Ordinance to be brought forward again later in a Building Ordinance.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MAJOR TRAILL, R.M.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Upon what date was Major Traill, R.M., appointed the temporary charge of the Mullingar District during the absence of Colonel Bowlby; how many Petty Sessions has he attended since; what extra salary is he receiving while in charge of the district; whether information has reached him that, at the Petty Sessions held at Clonmellon on the 16th instant, the entire time of the Court was taken up in hearing cases arising out of an agrarian dispute between Major Traill and Mr. Butler, J.P.; whether, during the hearing of one of the cases relating to a right of way, it transpired that Major Traill, previous to the hearing of the case, obtained a warrant for the arrest of a Mr. Boylan (Mr. Butler's land steward), who was detained in custody for several hours; can he state on whose responsibility was the arrest made; and, whether the Government will grant an inquiry into the circumstances of the case?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Major Traill was appointed to take the temporary charge of the Mullingar District on the 1st of the month. He attended one Petty Sessions. He was not in receipt of any extra salary for the temporary duty. As regards the Petty Sessions of Clonmellon on the 10th, the entire time occupied by the business of the Court was an hour and a-half. There appeared to have been a case arising out of the case between Mr. Butler and Major Traill, who were joint tenants in an estate. That case was first. Boylan was arrested; but was admitted to bail at the next Petty Session, on August 16. The warrant for his arrest was issued on an information made by Major Traill, that Boylan had obstructed the passage to Major Traill's premises by digging a trench across the gateway.

MR. TUITE: The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has not stated whether the issue of the warrant was legal or not?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN referred the hon. Member to the Attorney General for Ireland.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton) said, that if the warrant was illegal that would be a case for civil proceedings against the magistrate who issued the warrant, and as Attorney General he did not think he should express an opinion upon the matter.

MR. TUITE: Assuming the warrant to be illegal, does the right hon. and learned Gentleman think that Major Traill is a proper person to administer the Criminal Law and Procedure Act in Ireland?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is an assumption, not a question.

THE SUGAR BOUNTIES—THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE.

MR. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether Her Majesty's Government have any further information to give as to the proposed International Conference on the Sugar Bounty Question; whether he can state which Powers have now consented to attend such Conference; and, whether he will lay upon the Table before the end of the Session any further "Correspondence on the subject of Sugar Bounties," in continuation of that already published, the last issue of which was dated December, 1884?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: The following Governments have accepted unconditionally the invitation to the Conference:—Austria-Hungary, Germany, Holland, Italy, Spain, and Denmark. Belgium has accepted; but will insist on the right of refining in bond. France, Russia, Brazil, Portugal, and Sweden and Norway have not given any answer. The United States cannot accept until the assembling of Congress; but it is understood that the Government will not take any exception to the meeting of the Conference without waiting for their previous concurrence. No Correspondence on the subject of the Conference could at present be presented.

POSTAL CONVENTION BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE, 1856 — PRIVILEGES TO MAIL STEAMERS.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR (Leicester) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, If it is a fact, as stated in the recent Consular Reports, and by the Hong Kong Chamber of Commerce, that, by order of the Home Government, French and German steamers carrying the mails obtain in British Colonial Ports the status of men of war, which includes freedom from arrest, freedom from search, and freedom from the operation of the Habeas Corpus, while those privileges, which give the vessels a prestige in the eye of shippers, are not granted to British mail steamers, which carry infinitely heavier mails; and, if he can state why this arrangement in favour of foreign steamers is made?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): The fifth Article of a Convention between England and France, dated September 24, 1856, and presented to Parliament in 1857, provides that when the packets employed by the British Post Office, or by the French Post Office, in execution of Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention are national vessels the property of the Government, or vessels chartered or subsidized by Government, they shall be considered and treated as vessels of war in the ports of the two countries at which they regularly or accidentally touch, and be thus entitled to the same honours and privileges. They shall not on any account be diverted from their especial duty, or be liable to seizure, detention, embargo, or *arret de prison.* The German Government applied to Her Majesty's Government in February, 1886, to grant the same privileges to the German subsidized steamers when those vessels began to run. Ordinances have been passed in Hong Kong and certain other Crown Colonies, at the instance of the Home Government, conferring on French and German mail steamers the privileges of men-of-war in the ports of those Colonies. This has been done in the case of the French steamers in order to give effect to certain clauses of the French Postal Convention of 1856; and in the case of the German steamers in order that they may be placed on the same footing as the French, so long as the above-named Convention remained in force.

POST OFFICE (SAVINGS BANKS DEPARTMENT)—PROMOTION TO CLERKSHIPS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Postmaster General, Whether two second class clerks in the Savings Bank Department have recently been appointed to first class clerkships, 73 seniors in one case and 86 seniors in the other having been passed over; and, whether he can state the grounds on which the Controller General of the Savings Bank Department found it necessary in so many cases to disregard the Rule as to seniority?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In answer to the hon. Member, I have to state that the two clerks who stood in the list in the order stated were recommended for promotion some months back, and that I sanctioned the recommendation only with great reluctance and after much doubt. The printed Regulations prescribe that promotion to the higher classes depends upon merit, not seniority. The hon. Member may be glad to know that having acted in these particular instances upon the recommendations made to me, I have determined to fill three other vacancies which have recently occurred in this branch by the selection of clerks senior in standing to those referred to in the Question.

SPAIN—A "FLOATING EXHIBITION" OF SPANISH PRODUCTS.

MR. BADEN-POWELL (Liverpool, Kirkdale) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware that a "Floating Exhibition" of Spanish products will shortly leave Valencia to make a tour of the ports of South America with the object of opening these markets to Spanish goods; and, whether he can instruct our Consular Agents in the ports visited to report specially upon this Exhibition, both as to its influence on trade, and its system of management?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have no official information respecting the Floating Exhibition referred to; but Her Majesty's Consul at Barcelona will be instructed to report on the subject; and the attention of Her Majesty's Consuls at the ports in South America which may be visited by the Exhibition will be called to it, and they will be directed to report in the sense suggested.

MASTER OF THE HAWKS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the sum of about £950 paid annually to the Master of the Hawks is all payable to him as his own salary, or whether any portion of it represents other charges?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The original grant of King James II. to Charles Duke of St. Albans was as follows:—Salary as Master of the Hawks, £391 1*s.* 5*d.*; allowances for expenses in connection with the office, £982 10*s.*; total, £1,373 11*s.* 5*d.* The gross sum was subsequently reduced by office fees, &c., to £965, the net amount now paid.

MR. HANBURY asked, what were the duties of the office, and how this sum was made up—how much was paid for salary and attendance, and how much for the food of the hawks?

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, what was the cause of the delay in the publication of the Evidence taken before the Select Committee, which contained all the facts relating to the Question?

MR. JACKSON said, he could not answer the Question of the hon. Member for Northampton without making inquiry; neither could he say what proportion of the sum of £965 was paid for salary, and what for the other portions of the service.

MR. HANBURY: I shall repeat the Question on Monday. The information can be got.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked, if 20 per cent was taken off the salary in accordance with 4 & 5 *Will.* III.?

MR. JACKSON asked for Notice of the Question.

BRITISH GUIANA—ABSENCE OF THE PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS.

MR. HEATHCOTE (Staffordshire, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, What information he has as to the absence, on leave or otherwise, of the principal Government officials of British Guiana; and, whether it is the fact that recently there was an Acting Governor, an Acting Colonial Secretary, an Acting Attorney General, an Acting Puisne Judge, an Acting Receiver General, an Acting Registrar, an Acting Chief Commissary, an Acting Solicitor General, an Acting Surgeon General, an Acting Inspector of Hospitals, and an Acting Stipendary Magistrate, the actual holders of these posts being either away on leave of absence or performing the work of some absent official?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Sir **Henry Holland**) (Hampstead): All leaves when granted are reported to the Secretary of State. The statement in the second paragraph is substantially correct. It is the fact that four principal officers — namely, the Governor, the Attorney General, a Puisne Judge, and the Receiver General—left the same day for three months' leave, which is due after two years' residence. This, of course, led to several acting appointments. It does not appear that injury or inconvenience to the Public Service has been caused by these temporary arrangements; and this was the most convenient time of the year for officers to go on leave, as the legislative work was all concluded and the combined Court closed. The Governor and the Puisne Judge have already returned; the Attorney General will be back on October 6, and the Receiver General on September 22.

PUBLIC HEALTH (SCOTLAND)—LOCH LONG AND LOCH GOIL.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the Government has yet received the Report of Dr. Littlejohn on the state of Loch Long and Loch Goil, and whether he can communicate the purport of such Report to the House; whether the Chemical Company and the Clyde Trustees are almost daily discharging large quantities of noxious refuse at the mouth of Loch Long; and, whether the Government will take any action during the Recess?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. **Macdonald**) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The Secretary for Scotland received only yesterday the *interim* Report from Dr. Littlejohn, who states that, in his opinion, whatever may be the exact cause of the pollution referred to, a nuisance is caused by its affecting the amenity and salubrity of the shores. This, in its turn, must influence the health of the residents. I believe the discharge complained of takes place constantly, if not daily. No time will be lost in dealing with the matter, the importance of which is fully recognized.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT—STEAM LAUNCHES ON THE THAMES.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he has noticed a case in which the owner of a steam launch on the Thames was fined on the prosecution of the Board of Trade, because he took friends on his launch without having a passengers' certificate; and, whether it is in the contemplation of the Board of Trade to fine all owners of launches who take friends on board of them, without having a passengers' certificate?

The SECRETARY (Baron **Henry de Worms**) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I have noticed the prosecution referred to, which was in the case of a steam launch reported to the Board of Trade as plying for hire and having 40 passengers on board. This prosecution was instituted under the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, with which, in the interests of public safety, it is the duty of the Board of Trade to secure compliance. It has, however, no bearing on the case referred to in the second part of the hon. Member's Question.

THE CAPE COLONY—THE REGISTRATION BILL.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has received representations from Coloured Natives of the Cape Colony and others, that a Registration Bill which has passed the Cape Parliament is really a Disfranchising Bill, by which large numbers of the Coloured subjects of Her Majesty, who are entitled to be enrolled as voters under the Law hitherto in force, would be deprived of that right; whether the Governor of the Cape Colony has assented to that Bill or reserved assent; and, whether the Government will inquire into the matter, and will take care that the power of Her Majesty to disallow that Law is preserved till it is ascertained whether it really does disfranchise the major part of the population?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Sir **Henry Holland** (Hampstead): Telegrams have been received showing that some of the Natives object to the Act on the grounds stated. The Act has been assented to by the Governor, and Her Majesty's Government are awaiting his Report upon it, after considering which Report, with the representations of the Natives, they will decide whether the law really does contain such a measure of disfranchisement as would justify its disallowance. The power of disallowance remains in force for two years from receipt of the law here.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—EXPENSES OF THE NILE EXPEDITION AND FRONTIER DEFENCE.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, prior to the present year, Parliament was ever informed that the Egyptian Government was to be relieved by this country of the military expenses incurred by them in connection with the Nile Expedition, and for the defence of their own frontiers, and paid for the use of the Egyptian State Railways in the same connection; and, with reference to the Report of the Controller and Auditor General (presented this year) regarding the charge of £232,986 against the old Vote of Credit by Treasury Minutes of September and October, 1886—namely, that "the amount is not properly chargeable to the Vote," whether Her Majesty's Government have yet obtained the approval of the Auditor General for the charge; or, if not, whether they will either recover the amount from the Egyptian Government or submit it for the sanction of Parliament?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): As regards the second Question of the hon. Member, I may say that the Public Accounts Committee has passed this charge. They say in their Report that—

> "Though unsatisfactory, the course taken was the best that could have been adopted under the circumstances."

With regard to the first Question, the expenses incurred by the Egyptian Government were not those incurred in defence of their own frontier, but in support of the English Expedition for the relief of General Gordon. I should be sorry to think that this country desired to evade a responsibility so clearly imposed by all considerations of honour, and practically on many occasions accepted.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, whether the Expedition was undertaken for the relief of General Gordon, or for the relief of a large number of Egyptian troops; and, whether Parliament was ever informed before the present year that the Egyptian Government was to be recouped for its services?

MR. E. STANHOPE: The Expedition, undoubtedly, was primarily for the relief of General Gordon. Parliament was informed at the time by the responsible Minister that the Government recognized its responsibility towards General Gordon.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, whether General Gordon was ever most conspicuous in saying that he did not require an Expedition for his personal relief, but only for those who served with him?

MR. E. STANHOPE: I am sure the country will feel glad that such public spirit on the part of General Gordon did not lead the Government to the acceptance of such a pusillanimous policy.

INDIAN CONTAGIOUS DISEASES ACT, 1868—REPEAL.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Her Majesty's Government are now prepared to take steps to secure the repeal of the Indian Contagious Diseases Act, 1868, and of similar Regulations in connection with the Cantonment Acts?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JOHN GORST) (Chatham): No representation has yet been received from the Government of India on this subject; but their attention has again been called to the matter.

WAR OFFICE—MILITARY DEPOT AT NORTON, WORCESTERSHIRE — INSUFFICIENT ACCOMMODATION.

SIR EDMUND LECHMERE (Worcestershire, Bewdley) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, his attention having already been called to the complaints made by the inhabitants of the district surrounding the Military Depôt at Norton, Worcestershire, as to the insufficient accommodation provided for the families of the married staff sergeants attached to the depôt, by the erection of cottages containing only one bedroom each, he has further considered the subject; and, whether he is prepared, on behalf of the Government, to supply such additional bedroom accommodation as will prevent the unsatisfactory moral and sanitary results inseparable from the crowding of parents and their families into one sleeping apartment?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): My hon. Friend has already called our attention to this subject. I need scarcely say that we desire, as much as anyone, to avoid objectionable overcrowding; and if in any case it can be shown to exist, I shall be glad to apply what remedy may be possible. Perhaps my hon. Friend will furnish me with any particulars that may be in his possession.

SPAIN—ALLEGED MURDER OF A BRITISH MERCHANT SEAMAN BY A SPANISH SENTRY IN THE PORT OF BILBAO.

Admiral FIELD (Sussex, Eastbourne) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is in a position to inform the House of the result of his inquiries into the alleged murder of a British merchant seaman by a Spanish sentry in the Port of Bilbao; and, whether any representation, or demand for compensation for the poor man's family, has been made to the Spanish Government, in respect of the aforesaid outrage?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Since my answers on the 28th and 29th of July nothing definite has been heard on the subject from the Spanish Government. We know, however, from Her Majesty's Consul at Bilbao that he had placed the sworn depositions taken by him in the hands of the Spanish authorities, and had called their attention to certain particulars. They, on their part, were collecting evidence, with a view to a thorough investigation of the case.

Admiral FIELD: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether or not he is satisfied that a murder was committed?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I think the hon. and gallant Member will see that it would be in the highest degree improper if I were to express an opinion upon a matter still under judicial investigation.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES—OUTRAGES BY BELGIAN ON ENGLISH FISHING VESSELS.

Sir EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether any and, if so, what progress has been made in carrying out the recommendations of the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade in December last, with the view of putting a stop to outrages by Belgian on English fishing vessels; and, whether the Board of Trade Fishery Department have brought pressure to bear on the Admiralty Authorities to establish a much more efficient system of protection than has been the case in the past for English drift-net fishing vessels within the limits of the North Sea Fisheries Convention, and also for the protection of English trawling fleets within the same area, with the view of guarding against a repetition of last season's losses and cases similar to the capture of the Grimsby smack *Lady Godiva* off the German coast?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Report of the Committee appointed by the Board of Trade to inquire into the complaints of damage alleged to have been inflicted on British drift-net fisheries in the North Sea was at once communicated to Her Majesty's Representatives in the countries which were parties to the North Sea Convention of 1882, and the Belgian Government, which is the one chiefly concerned, at once appointed a Departmental Committee to consider the recommendations contained in the Report. The Fisheries Department of the Board of Trade have also been in communication with the Admiralty on those recommendations which relate to British cruisers, with the result that the force in the North Sea will be increased to five steamers and four sailing cruisers. This the Admiralty regard as sufficient to afford adequate protection to the fisheries. The rocket throwing one star is to be recognized as a signal of communication between fishing vessels and Her Majesty's cruisers, and the question of electric search lights is under consideration by the Admiralty. I may add that a placard, of a size convenient for mounting on cardboard, indicating the Regulations to which the crews of British fishing vessels are subject in the North Sea is being prepared for distribution amongst our vessels with a view to their carrying the same.

CENTRAL ASIA—ESCAPE OF AYOUB KHAN FROM TEHERAN.

Mr. LEGH (Lancashire, S.W. Newton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he is able to give any information as to the escape of Ayoub Khan from Teheran?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): It is a fact that Ayoub Khan and two other Afghan refugees have escaped from Teheran. We have received no information as to their destination.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES—CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES IN THE BELGIAN COURTS OF LAW.

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government will grant pecuniary aid to the British fishermen in order to enable them to prosecute their claims for damages in the Belgian Courts of Law; and, whether effectual measures will be taken for the protection in future of British fishermen belonging to the East and South Coasts?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Consuls will give every aid in their power to help those who have grounds of complaint to obtain redress. I do not think that anything has been omitted that is possible for the due protection of British fishermen on the East and South Coasts. As I have informed the House, the Belgian Government have shown their readiness to control their fishermen. We heard a few days ago that they had resolved to adopt a system of licenses revocable for cause shown, which was recommended by the Board of Trade Committee. The Belgian Authorities have, within the last few days, protected the British fishermen attacked at Ostend, the Gendarmerie and Civic Guard firing on the rioters, with loss of life; and the facilities afforded by Belgian Law Courts are such as to give every ground for hoping that no case of injury will remain without redress.

POST OFFICE—TRANSFER OF LETTERS FROM RAILWAY STATION PILLAR BOXES TO RAILWAY POST OFFICE TRAVELLING VANS

MR. CAVENDISH BENTINCK (Whitehaven) asked the Postmaster General, Whether, having regard to the statement made by him, arrangements can be made by the Post Office to facilitate the transfer of letters directly from the Railway Station pillar-boxes to the Railway Post Office travelling vans; and, whether, under proper Regulations, and in cases of necessity, railway guards may be permitted to carry supplementary Post Office bags?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): There is rather more difficulty in carrying out the suggestion of my right hon. Friend than would appear at first sight. If letters were indiscriminately placed in trains passing a particular station without previous sortation, they would frequently go in the wrong direction, and with the result of delay. I am glad, however, to say, that in the particular case of Whitehaven, in which he is specially interested, I have arranged that a letter-box shall be attached to the 7.30 p.m. train from Whitehaven to Carnforth. There are also difficulties in employing railway officials upon the duty of collecting letters, emptying boxes, and making up bags. But I am willing to consider the suggestion in conjunction with the Railway Companies, whose servants it is proposed to employ.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—WRECK OF THE CHANNEL STEAMER "VICTORIA."

VISCOUNT BARING (Bedfordshire, Biggleswade) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he has received any Report as to the result of the inquiry promised by the French Government into the conduct of the officers in charge of the lighthouse near Dieppe on the occasion of the wreck of the steam packet *Victoria?*

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Board of Trade have received no Report such as that referred to by the noble Viscount; and, in answer to their further inquiry, they are informed that it is not the practice of the French Government to institute a minute inquiry into the circumstances attending the loss of a foreign vessel off the French coast.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—EVICTION IN LIMERICK—MR. O'CONNOR.

MR. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether at the eviction of a Mr.

O'Connor, a tenant on the Limerick property of Mr. Delmege, on yesterday, only a portion of the tenant's furniture was removed; and, whether, at an eviction where all the furniture has been removed by the Sheriff, legal possession has been obtained? The hon. Gentleman said the last paragrah was misprinted. The word "all" should be "only a part of."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton) declined to answer, on the ground that to reply would be to give private legal advice to the tenant. He was sure hon. Members would object to his giving, in the form of answers to Questions, such advice to landlords.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—PAYMENT OF WITNESSES IN CRIMINAL CHARGES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Treasury, whilst it repays the expenses of witnesses on charges of felony and certain misdemeanours before examining magistrates, where a committal for trial has taken place, refuses to repay the expenses of such witnesses which, in accordance with the Statute 29 & 30 *Vict.* c. 52, may have been allowed where the charge has been dismissed?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The prosecutions of which the costs are repaid to the local funds from the Vote of Parliament are limited to those tried at Assizes and Quarter Sessions, and to adjudications by magistrates under the Summary Jurisdiction Act. This limitation excludes dismissed cases; and although the Statute quoted gives a discretion to the magistrates to charge upon local funds the expenses of witnesses in certain dismissed cases, it does not impose any charge upon public funds.

ADMIRALTY—DARTMOUTH TRAINING COLLEGE FOR NAVAL CADETS.

MR. MALLOCK (Devon, Torquay) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether there is any truth in the report that it is intended to remove from Dartmouth the Educational Establishment for Training of Naval Cadets?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): There is no truth whatever in this rumour, and I do not understand how it originated.

FIRES (METROPOLIS)—THE FIRE AT WHITELEY'S—GAS PIPES.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, as representing the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether, at the recent fire at Whiteley's and other great fires in the Metropolitan District, it has been found that a great and dangerous accessory to the conflagration has been the bursting of gas pipes serving the premises; whether the Board or any other authority posess the power to require all premises supplied with gas to have a ready means of disconnecting such supply outside the premises accessible to the police immediately on discovery of fire; and, whether any precautions are or will be taken in this direction?

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) (who replied) said: The Metropolitan Board of Works is now in recess, and I am not in a position to give authoritative answers on its behalf; but as the present Question relates to the same subject as the Metropolitan Board of Works (Fire Brigade Expenses) Bill, of which I have charge in this House, I have thought it right, in the absence of the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire (Mr. Tatton Egerton) to make inquiry upon it of Captain Shaw, who states as follows:—

> "No gas-pipes burst at the recent fires at Mr. Whiteley's premises; and, in fact, the bursting of gas-pipes during fires is a very rare event and has never given me any trouble."

I am not aware that the Board or any other authority possess the power suggested in the hon. Member's Question.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—TRADING ON THE OPOBO RIVER.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that several English firms have equipped steam launches for the purpose of trading with the producing markets direct, in competition to the middlemen of the Opobo River, under promise of protection from Her Majesty's Consul for the Bights of Benin and Biafra; and, whether, in the event of such protection being given, it will also be extended to the Natives of Bonny, who are anxious to trade in the same markets?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): With regard to the first portion of the Question, Her Majesty's Government are aware that trading in the Opobo River has for some time past been in an unsettled state, and the matter is engaging their serious attention. Certain traders have invoked Consular assistance; but to what extent that has been rendered is not at present known. With respect to the second paragraph, without particularizing any Chief or party, the object will be to render trade unrestricted to all persons, white or black.

WALES—INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION —LEGISLATION.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in the measure which the Government has promised to introduce early next Session to deal with Intermediate Education in Wales, provision will be made for the promotion of technical and agricultural instruction?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I said it was impossible for the Government to indicate what the provision of a Bill would be which would be introduced next Session; but most careful attention would be given during the Recess to the question of technical and agricultural instruction, and provision would be made, if the Government saw their way to do so, in that measure for Wales to secure these objects.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND—THE PEW RENTS OF IRONBRIDGE.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Mr. G. Owen, the people's churchwarden, of Ironbridge, who has been sentenced to 28 days' imprisonment, at the suit of the present incumbent, Rev. G. Wintour, in the Madeley County Court, because, finding the church in debt to a considerable amount, and that the pew-rents (which were divisible between the church and the incumbent) were insufficient for both purposes, he deemed it his duty to pay off the church debt before paying the incumbent; whether Mr. Owen was elected churchwarden against his wish in 1884; whether any dereliction of duty whatever has been proved against Mr. Owen; and, if not, why has he been punished; and, whether he will direct an inquiry into the circumstances of the case?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight) (who replied) said: I think the hon. Member cannot have been made acquainted with the facts of the case referred to in the Question. It appears from Mr. Owen's statement that, having been elected churchwarden in 1884, and receiving the pew-rents, some portion of which was undoubtedly due to Mr. Wintour, an action was brought in the County Court, whereupon the question between the parties was, by the consent of all parties, referred to Mr. Beddoe, the Registrar of the diocese. Mr. Beddoe made his award on the 2nd June, 1887, finding that there was due to Mr. Wintour the sum of about £23. No attempt was made to set aside the award; but Mr. Owen, on the 11th of June, and apparently in order to prevent the execution of judgment, gave a bill of sale upon his effects for £35. Mr. Owen was a beer-house keeper, and still continues to carry on the business. The proceedings referred to in the Question were to enforce the award; and the award being valid, and not set aside, the learned County Court Judge had no alternative except to enforce payment. The merits of the case, which had been dealt with by the arbitrator, could not possibly be gone into by the learned Judge on this hearing. There is, in my opinion, no necessity for any inquiry, as I cannot see that the County Court Judge has been guilty of any misconduct.

HIGHWAY ACTS — THE SALVATION ARMY — RELIGIOUS SERVICES AT STAMFORD.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it was the case that only two of the five members of the Salvation Army sentenced recently at Stamford had appealed; and whether he would do anything to mitigate the severity of the punishment of the three men still remaining in gaol; whether it was not the case that on several similar occasions preceding Home Secretaries had ordered the transference of such prisoners to the debtors' side of the gaol, so as to secure that they should have better food and less rigorous treatment; and whether he will order such transference in the present case, pending the decision of the appeal?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): It is true that two only of the five members of the Salvation Army have appealed. There are two precedents in which sentences of imprisonment with hard labour were altered into imprisonment without hard labour; but there is no precedent for transferring to the debtors' side a person sentenced to imprisonment without hard labour, as was the case with the men; and I am advised that I have no legal right to give such an order.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): If it be a fact that two out of the five prisoners in Leicester Goal have appealed, and therefore been released, are we to understand that the remaining three are still in gaol; and I should like to ask further whether the right hon. Gentleman will allow them to be kept in prison for 21 days for such a ridiculous offence as preaching on a Sunday?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman describe as a ridiculous offence a case which has been decided by a Constitutional tribunal of the land to be a serious one. There are three members of the Salvation Army still in gaol—two of them have appealed, and, pending the appeal, they have been liberated. If the appeal is unsuccessful, of course they will have to serve their sentences.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: Then, without characterizing the offence, I want to know if Her Majesty's Government intend to sanction the imprisonment of Nonconformists in this country for exercising their civil rights?

[No reply.]

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I wish to ask the Home Secretary, whether he gives his sanction to this imprisonment for Protestant preaching, and whether he would approve of the imprisonment of John Bunyan?

MR. MATTHEWS: I have told the House more than once already that the imprisonment was not for preaching at all; but the facts upon which the magistrates thought fit to convict were the mere facts of obstructing the public highway. [An hon. MEMBER: For the purpose of preaching.] Upon that conviction a question of both law and fact arose—whether the place on which the meeting was held was a public highway or not. The hon. Member will see that there is no question of Nonconformists or any other religious question.

MR. JAMES STUART asked, whether the Home Secretary was aware that a Primrose League band had played in the place referred to, and had not been interferred with? He had that information from a member of the League.

MR. MATTHEWS: I am not in the least aware of the facts mentioned by the hon. Member; the only facts of which I am aware with regard to this question are those of the judicial proceedings.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) ACT, 1885—PAYMENT OF POOR RATE COLLECTORS.

MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.) said, that as he did not see the hon. Member for Stephen's Green (Mr. Dwyer Gray) present, and as his Question was of great public interest, he would put the Question as follows:—

"To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government proposes to take any steps this Session to secure that the Irish poor rate collectors shall be remunerated for the onerous duties imposed upon them by 'The Representation of the People Act, 1884,' and 'The Registration Act of 1885,' so that the registration of Parliamentary voters may be properly carried out in Ireland?"

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman asks this Question, I suppose, in consequence of the ruling I gave the other day. If the hon. Gentleman is personally interested in the Question he can put it; but as there is nothing personal in the Question, it would be rather a stretch of power for the hon. Gentleman to put it for another Member without having received the sanction of the latter.

MR. JOHNSTON apologized for having misunderstood the Speaker's ruling.

THE LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked when the Land Law (Ireland) Act would be printed? It was now a week since the Act practically passed; and as it would take about three weeks to prepare Rules under it, it was desirable that the Act should be in the hands of Members as soon as possible.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, it was not the fault of the Government, but of the printers. He would do his best to accelerate the work.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

In reply to Mr. BURT (Morpeth),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he was not able to name the day on which the Report of the Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Bill would be taken. It might be for the convenience of the House, however, if he indicated the course of Business generally. He therefore wished to say that the Irish Estimates would be taken, beginning on Monday next, as it was necessary they should have money for some of the Services in Ireland; and that when the Civil Service Estimates were complete, and the Allotments Bill through Committee, the Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Bill would be taken. He hoped that the delay would not extend beyond the end of next week.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked, whether the Indian Budget would not be taken next week?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think I can say it will not be taken next week.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked, whether any Scotch Estimates would be taken to-morrow, and whether it was proposed that the Sitting to-morrow should end at 6 o'clock?

MR. W. H. SMITH replied, that the intention of the Government was to put down the Allotments Bill for to-morrow. No decision had been come to yet as to whether the Sitting should be held under the Wednesday Rule; but he would make an announcement regarding it before the close of this Sitting. The Scotch Estimates must take their course now with the other Civil Service Estimates, after the Irish Estimates had been taken.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, Mr. CONYBEARE, and Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL pressed for information respecting the hours of to-morrow's Sitting of the House.

MR. W. H. SMITH replied, that the House would certainly meet at 12, and that if it were not to rise at 6 an intimation to that effect must appear on the Orders.

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked, whether the Naval Estimates would be taken this year or next year?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The hon. Gentleman cannot be serious in the Question he has asked; and I put it whether it is consistent with the dignity of the House that such a Question should be asked?

MR. GOURLEY: I wish to know when the right hon. Gentleman intends to take the Naval Estimates?

MR. W. H. SMITH: When the other Estimates are disposed of.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked, whether the Civil Service Estimates were to be taken daily until concluded?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was not able to state that the Civil Service Estimates would be taken every day until concluded. It was intended to proceed with the Irish Civil Service Estimates from day to day unless, if they lasted longer than four days, they were interrupted by the Superannuation Vote.

SCOTLAND—THE HESSIAN FLY.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked the noble Lord the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he could state the names of the Scotch counties in which the Hessian fly was reported to exist at present, and the extent in each county; also, whether the Government would instruct a Member of the Special Committee to proceed to Scotland to make a similar inquiry to that made in England; and, more especially, whether he would visit the Counties of Elgin and Nairn for that purpose?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (Lord JOHN MANNERS) (Leicestershire, E.): The counties in Scotland in which the Hessian fly has appeared are as follows:—Aberdeenshire, slight attack; Berwickshire, very slight; Fifeshire, extensive; Forfarshire, extensive; Kincardineshire, extensive; Haddingtonshire, slight; Perthshire, extensive. I am in communication with my hon. Friend the Member for the Malden Division of Essex (Mr. Gray) as to his visit to Scotland for the purpose of inquiry. I do not think I ought to instruct my hon. Friend as to the counties in Scotland which he should specially visit.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

IRISH NATIONAL LEAGUE (SPECIAL PROCLAMATION).

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [25th August],

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, humbly to represent to Her Majesty that there has been laid before this House a Special Proclamation of the Viceroy of Ireland, declaring the Association known as the Irish National League to be a dangerous Association, under 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887.'
>
> "That no information has been furnished to Parliament to justify the issue of the said Special Proclamation, by virtue of which Her Majesty's subjects are liable to be punished as criminals without judicial inquiry into the nature of their acts.
>
> "And, that this House, in the absence of such information, prays that the said Proclamation shall not continue in force as to the Association named and described therein."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN (Glasgow, Bridgeton): Sir, I consider myself very fortunate in having returned to the House at a time when I can utilize the experience I gained in the most important position I ever held and probably ever shall hold. While I was Secretary to Lord Spencer the principles upon which law and order can be restored and maintained in Ireland were burnt deeply into my mind by observing the consequences of errors which had been committed in the past, by our own mistakes, and by the success of the policy which, even while those mistakes were being committed, we were steadily trying to pursue. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour)—and I hope that in speaking of him I shall never forget the tone in which a former Chief Secretary ought to speak of a present one, or to make allowances for those difficulties which I know so well to exist from my own experience—the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary began the more serious part of his speech by reading what he said was an extract from a speech of mine. Well, I did not remember it. I could not remember it especially, among a hundred just like it. But the right hon. Gentleman had not read three lines before I clearly recognized the style and line of thought. He read these words—

> "Every quiet citizen and every member of that minority, which would not be a minority if both Parties would join in a determination that law and order should be no longer trifled with in Ireland, any more than it is trifled with in Yorkshire or in Somersetshire."

Law and order were trifled with less and less every month that Lord Spencer was in Ireland until they almost ceased to be trifled with at all; and that was because, according to his lights, he applied to Ireland the policy which in like circumstances he would have applied to Somersetshire or Yorkshire—a policy which, as I shall presently prove incontrovertibly, is diametrically opposite to that embodied and foreshadowed in the Proclamation of the Government. I am not now speaking of the present Crimes Bill. Now the difference of policy began very early, in the different manner in which we used to present our measures to Parliament. No one can forget who took a part in the discussions on the Crimes Bill of 1882 the very serious method in which we presented it to the House, and the very serious grounds upon which we presented it. We did not ask the House to accept that measure on hearsay; we argued the case from published and public documents; we argued the question of special juries, a most important part of the measure, from the Blue Book of a Committee of the House of Lords which, I suppose, had been six months before the House. We based our statements of the necessity of a Crimes Bill on Parliamentary Returns of outrages, and very grave Returns they were. Those were not the days when you had white gloves at Assizes and Judges congratulating your juries on their having no work to do. The Papers were placed before Parliament which showed 7,788 outrages in the previous year and 26 agrarian and political murders in the first half of the year with which we were dealing, and when we came to the nature of those outrages it was not a question of reading them from notes of speeches to the House which it heard for the first time. Here is the Return for

1881, containing particulars of, I suppose, 500 cases of homicide, firing at the person, amd firing into dwellings. You can almost read them across the floor of the House, they are so largely printed; and that Return was in the hands of hon. Members for months before we introduced the Crimes Bill. Now, if any hon. Member had doubted the information contained in this Return he had plenty of time to write over to Ireland, or even to go over to get up a counter-case. But what was the case last night? The right hon. Gentleman read a series of statements drawn, he said, from three sources—"Advertisements in the newspapers, confidential documents, and notes which he had made in certain cases"—and I can assure him, although I never heard a clearer or better spoken speech, that it required close and minute attention to discover from which source those different statements were taken. Now, recollect what we are engaged upon to-night. If we sanction this Proclamation every Irishman who belongs to the National League, and who will not leave it at the command of the Government, will be liable, at the discretion of the Government, to be severely punished as a common criminal. That liability after to-night, if the Proclamation is sanctioned, will not depend upon any judicial proceeding whatever that is worth the name. Perhaps hon. Members think in saying this that I am casting a slur upon the Resident Magistrates as implying that they are in some sense the tools of the Government. That was the impression of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), who charged me in a sort of easy and sketchy manner in *The Times* with having spoken very highly of the Resident Magistrates when I was Chief Secretary, and I ought, he said, to trust them now. To this I replied—

"I have spoken and I speak highly of the Resident Magistrates as a class, and I am extremely grateful to them for the hearty and loyal manner in which they seconded and served Lord Spencer. Thinking highly of them, I trust them; and I am quite certain that when Lord Londonderry has proclaimed the National League, and when any Irish Parliamentary Representative, or editor, or priest, or farmer is brought before the Bench on the charge of belonging to that League, and when that charge is proved, the Resident Magistrate will commit him to gaol with hard labour, as

by his judicial obligation he will be absolutely bound to do."

That letter appeared in *The Times*, and a few days afterwards I received a letter from one of the ablest and best of the class of Resident Magistrates, in which he thanked me for exactly stating their case, and the terrible, unavoidable, invidious task which was thrown upon them, exactly as, he said, he wished to have it stated. Once let the League be proclaimed, and the thing is over, and every Irishman who is sent before a Resident Magistrate will go to prison, as certainly as if he were sent to the Bastille by a *lettre de cachet.* He will have no trial after this. This is the only trial he will get—here, and now, on the floor of this House; and the statements of the right hon. Gentleman and the statements of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) are the only evidence which will ever be brought against him. Their statements are of a nature which peculiarly require to be examined by a judicial process. The stories are long; they spread over a great many months and years; and the links which bind the different parts of the story together are, perhaps, the most important things of all about them. The right hon. Gentleman laid great stress on his contention that Boycotting depends upon the probability of outrage. [Mr. A. J. BALFOUR dissented.] I beg pardon; they were not his own words; he quoted from the Cowper Commission to that effect. Now, to prove that contention, which, if the right hon. Gentleman does not lay stress on it, I still think is a most important possible contention, it requires the most minute examination of many cases; and I could not gather, and—reading his speech over—I cannot ascertain that he proved that there was a great and growing connection between the operations of the National League and outrage in Ireland. Now, in order to prove that with the fulness and certainty which would justify us in allowing the Government to make the fact of membership of the National League a crime all over Ireland, we should have tabulated accounts of the number of branches of the League and their activity, and the number of outrages in every county in Ireland. It is quite preposterous to send people to prison for belonging to the League in

Wexford, or in Meath, or in Roscommon —where there are practically no outrages at all—because you have given us one case in Kerry, one case in Clare, one case in West Galway, and one case in Longford—where, by-the-bye, the outrage lately consisted of one action—one threatening letter—in the course of three months in which crime has appeared to follow upon the denunciation of the League. But not only are these statements not complete or carefully tabulated, but they should have been before the House for weeks, and it appears that they might have been before the House for months. The right hon. Gentleman says—

> "I have been of opinion ever since I went to the Irish Office that the League came under the definition of a dangerous association; but I thought it inexpedient to proclaim it until the Land Act was passed."

Now, I want to go to business throughout my speech, and I shall not make any reference to those words; I did not quite gather their meaning, and it is not essential to my purpose. This is the 26th of August, and the right hon. Gentleman became Irish Secretary while the Session was quite young. Thinking, as he then thought, that the National League came under the head of a dangerous association, he should at once have set the authorities in Dublin and in the country districts to prepare the necessary statements in order that they might have been early and maturely laid before the House of Commons and the House of Lords. Instead of that, every one of those hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway heard for the first time from his mouth the statement on the judicial examination of which by this House so much that is so important to them all depends. They have for the first time, after post time on Thursday, heard this statement. The verdict of the House—for it is a verdict—is to be given this evening or to-morrow—Saturday morning. They have no time obviously to send over to Ireland. The House has before it the notes of the cases prepared by the right hon. Gentleman—that is to say, they have his story with the striking circumstances put forward which have conscientiously convinced him of the truth of the case, which he looks at from an exceedingly different point of view from hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway did their best under the circumstances. The hon. Member for West Kerry (Mr. Edward Harrington) extemporized an arrangement of counter-evidence at dinner time, when a considerable number of those who heard the evidence for the prosecution were necessarily absent. The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) argued with great power and with a remarkable array of authentic facts on the connection and want of connection between the operations of the National League and crime in Ireland; and a great number of hon. Gentlemen listened carefully and with loud applause to the very pleasant and courteous speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Scotland (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson), in which he read out of a pamphlet—which, I guess, was provided by some Society like the Loyal Patriotic—such statements as that a branch of the National League had passed a resolution that those who were not with them were against them; and that another branch passed a resolution that the members should employ an auctioneer who belonged to the League. They heard the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Scotland say that notoriety was the main reason for attacking the League, but that, on the other hand, on the spur of the moment, and at an evening's notice, the members of the League ought to be prepared, after that notoriety, with a complete set of resolutions condemning Boycotting and outrage. And after they heard this speech, which was, as I say, a capital and attractive speech, hon. Gentlemen went away while the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor)—in the presence, indeed, of a capital audience on this side of the House, but in the absence of those who are to be his and his fellows' judges to-night—pleaded, and pleaded with a great deal of force, of eloquence, and I think, of reason, for the liberties of himself and those who sit with him. Now, I do not blame hon. Members, if they will allow me to say so without impertinence, for going away. I do not want to comment upon their conduct. You cannot expect people to sit as judges or in any other capacity after midnight in any great number. But I do protest against the Government not having laid upon the

Table one shred or one tittle of the evidence which might have been before us for months, and of which even the latest and the freshest portion might have been on the Table for fully a week, in which case we should have been enabled to refer to Ireland for comment and counter-information. With regard to this mass of stories and statements as it stands before us I will say three things which will have to be considered before, in consequence of these statements, the House sanctions the Proclamation. In the first place, the general result of the operations of the League, even as here described, has not been to increase crime, or to lead to a general non-payment of rent. The League is universal in Ireland, and almost everywhere in Ireland agrarian crime is infinitesimal in amount and of the whitest dye. Agrarian crime is collected in a very few counties, and where the Irish landlords have made the same reductions as landlords have in England and in Scotland, taking Ireland as a whole, they have got in their rents as easily as they have in this country. We see in the newspapers that individuals have been brought before National League Courts for paying their rent. Of course, I am not here to defend that—on the contrary, I willingly reprobate it in the strongest terms. But in the same newspapers we also constantly read of large masses of tenants—the whole tenantry on an estate—settling with the agent of any landlord who is willing to grant the remissions which every landlord has granted in this country. In the next place, it must be remembered that these stories—which the right hon. Gentleman has told us he rests his case upon—are all of the same character. Either there are no outrages—there are, perhaps, few of these—and no intimidation—there are, perhaps, none of these—or else people who are guilty of the intimidation and have committed the outrages can be, and should be, proceeded against under other sections of the Act. Thus the right hon. Gentleman referred to the case of a man named Patrick Morrissy, whose house was fired into because, as alleged, he had paid his rent. But this outrage could be dealt with under the 4th clause of this Act. It was to punish outrages of this sort that the 4th section of this Act—the same clause as constituted the backbone of an Act of 1882—was placed upon the Paper. Again, on the 12th of June, five men carrying arms entered the house of Alexander Morgan, put the tenant on his knees, and fired shots over his head. The motive was that he had not paid his subscription to the National League. Whatever the motive was, the people who did that could certainly have been punished under the 2nd clause, and I believe they would have been punished under the 4th clause. When, again, a farmer is set upon by four men, and beaten within an inch of his life, can anyone doubt that those who committed that act could be punished under the 4th clause before a special jury? Then there was the case of Patrick Kennedy, who took a farm from which the widow Dempsey was evicted. The secretary to the National League branch wrote Kennedy a letter, in which it was stated that if he did not give up the farm, and that if he did not send some satisfactory account, they would be under the disagreeable necessity of declaring him still a land-grabber. The former tenant—Mrs. Dempsey—put some sheep and goats to graze on the farm, and her son cut the meadow, and Kennedy was afraid to interfere; and he stated that he was waiting for the passing of the Crimes Act before asserting his rights. Such were the facts stated by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. But the Crimes Act is now passed, and why do not the Government proceed in this case under the ordinary sections of the Act? Let the right hon. Gentleman indict all these people under the Crimes Act. There is no doubt that under the Crimes Act he could get at that secretary of the National League in case he has committed intimidation. If the National League were proclaimed this would be the result—that probably a great number of gentlemen and farmers of different descriptions, who are not connected with crime, would be ashamed to leave the National League, but the scoundrels and rascals who commit outrages are just the sort of fellows who would leave the League; and then, instead of Kennedy getting a missive from the secretary of the National League, he would get an anonymous letter; and my experience is that under the Crimes Act or any other Act you never would get at the writer of that letter. Under the ordinary sections of the Crimes Act you may get at the real criminals; but by proclaiming the League all you do is, in addition to, or in substitution for, the real criminals, you propose to punish a lot of people who have not committed criminal acts at all. The third thing to remember is that information of this class in quite as great, and even greater, abundance was before Lord Spencer when he proposed to deal with disorder in Ireland by punishing actual crime and not by proclaiming the Land League; and again it was also before Lord Salisbury, when he refused to take any powers at all of special criminal legislation for Ireland, and gave as one of his principal reasons for not asking for exceptional powers that Boycotting could not be put down by penal means. Now, I think it is a pity that the right hon. Gentleman did not remember this more clearly, and this it was that constituted the really weak part of his speech. He gave endless cases to show us that Boycotting exists in Ireland. He says—"What do you think of this? Did you ever hear of anything like that? Is there a man in the House who would defend it?" It is not a question of defending these cases; it is a question of dealing with them. And what we wanted was a sustained and close argument to prove that Lord Spencer was wrong when he refused to proclaim the National League, and said he would be content to punish actual crime—to prove that Lord Salisbury was wrong when he did not ask for any special powers to deal with it. We should have had, besides this—and we have not had it—a very clear statement indeed of the use to which the right hon. Gentleman and the Government intend to put the powers they ask for—the process by which they propose to arrive at the objects at which they are aiming, and the limitations which they propose to put upon the exercise of those powers, though, I must say, I care less for a statement on this latter point, however, for I feel sure that before long Her Majesty's Government will find that, in spite of themselves, they will be able to put no limitation on the exercise of these powers at all. The right hon. Gentleman's omissions in this respect have not been supplemented by any subsequent speaker. The hon. Member for South Tyrone elicited cheers by asking where was "the bullet of the assassin and the marauding of the midnight marauder?" One can always get cheers in this House by asking this sort of question. But the hon. Member did not say one single word—I see the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer taking a note, and I want him to take a note of this—he did not say one single word to prove that these midnight assassins and marauders could not be punished thoroughly well under the Crimes Act; and he did not say one word to show that you mend matters by punishing people who are not midnight assassins, and who are not midnight marauders. So far from that, the hon. Member clearly appeared to confess that he did not think that the Proclamation of the League would do any good. He said—

> "He wished that Parliament had not been called upon to give its sanction to this Proclamation. He wished the Government had seen their way to rely upon the summary jurisdiction and the other clauses of the Act to repress disorder. He wished they had given the Land Act, such as it was, a reasonable chance, instead of asking the House to take a seat on this switchback railway to be driven Heaven knows where."

And then the hon. Gentleman goes on to say that he is going to vote for the Proclamation. I am new to this House of Commons, and this is the first time that I have personally witnessed what appears to readers of newspapers to be the crudity and excessive frankness with which certain hon. and right hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House announce from time to time that they are going to vote for some great issue on what the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Scotland calls with great delicacy "collateral reasons." The performance of the hon. Member for South Tyrone surpassed my most sanguine expectations; and I earnestly hope it is the last which we shall have in the course of this debate. There has been a trumpery attempt to belittle the tremendous nature of this Proclamation by pointing out that it is general and not particular, and that it is only by another Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant that any branch of the League will be made amenable to the law, and that if the branches of the League behave themselves they will be left alone. There are two things to say to this argument. In the first place, is it such a recommendation to the British Parliament that a nobleman—whether, like Lord Spencer, he is one who judges for himself, or like some Viceroys who have been in Ireland is ready to sign everything that is laid before him—should have to write his signature a few hundred times before the liberties of the whole country are at the disposal of the Executive? But, in the second place, it is said that the fate of the branches of the League depends on their good behaviour. We must learn before we can estimate the meaning of this phrase what the standard of good behaviour is among those in whose hands their fate lies. I suppose there is no single influence behind the Government in regard to public opinion that is more important than *The Times* newspaper. *The Times* has most clearly put this part of the subject, and it lays down in a leading article the sort of cases in which a branch of the League will be proclaimed. I will take one out of the three. *The Times* gives this instance—

> "In the West Wicklow Election last year a Catholic who had signed the nomination paper of a Government candidate was forced to insert in the Nationalist paper a grovelling apology."

That is to say, if a branch of the League did what in my time has been done by political Clubs in Pall Mall—namely, exact an apology for nominating a candidate of different opinions from that of the majority of the Club—it is proposed that every member who attends a meeting of that branch, or collects subscriptions for it, or pays subscriptions to it, shall be liable to be imprisoned with hard labour. Seriously speaking, is there any hon. Gentleman here who, while prepared to vote for these extravagant penalties against people who have had to do with other people who are not convicted, but suspected, under this Act, is quite certain that others—the small tradesmen and agricultural labourers in the districts which he represents—would be quite willing, or would dare to sign, the nomination paper of the candidate for whom he might wish to vote? But I would rather go to the Ministry itself to see what the standard of good behaviour in their mind is. We know that the honest opinion of Members of the Government—an opinion held all the stronger the nearer they get to the Irish Office—is that the National League should be prevented from holding any political meeting whatever in any part of Ireland. They held this opinion lately so strongly that when Lord Spencer refused to put down these meetings by law they gave every countenance to those Orangemen who endeavoured—but not successfully in our time—to put them down in another way—by threats and violence. I will, first, take a very important Minister whom I see opposite, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton). He went to the Dromore meeting, and I take his own account of the proceeding. I am quite certain he went with the *bonâ fide* desire to make his protest against a policy of which he did not approve. In discussing the question afterwards in the House of Commons, he used very different language from that which was used by other important people, and his words were the words of a responsible man, and therefore I give them greater weight. He said they had come in thousands because the Government of this country shirked its duty. "That duty was to prevent the National League from holding public meetings." Well, if the noble Lord's sense of duty was so strong—[Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Go on with the reading.] I have not the passage here; but I can easily send for *Hansard*. I think the noble Lord said it would lead to a breach of the peace if counter-meetings were held. The noble Lord was of opinion that the Government ought to have suppressed the meetings of the National League. If that was the noble Lord's sense of duty, then—duty is a very strong word—well, I suppose it is still; and now the Government with which he acts have the power. Now, what is the case with the Irish Government itself? There are some Irish newspapers which are perpetually criticizing the opinions of the Privy Council in Ireland. I will not examine the opinions of the Privy Council in Ireland, though it was they who recommended the step we are now discussing. I would rather go to the Members of the Irish Government; but I frankly own I can find no clue to the Viceroy's opinions, and that makes me give more weight to those of his Advisers, and, above all, to the opinions of Lord Ashbourne, who is almost continuously on the spot, who is the head of the law, and who is more of a politician than the head of the law in Ireland, I suppose, ever has been in our time. In a debate in this House on February 8, 1884, Lord Ashbourne spoke out most clearly. He argued at great length, not only in favour of suppressing meetings by law, but in defence and palliation of those who had endeavoured to suppress them at the risk of violence. The late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes) had used language which, I think, should have disqualified him from sitting on the Bench of Justice and impartiality in such a country as Ireland—language which Lord Ashbourne did his best to defend. I do not blame him at the time for defending the language; but I want to read the arguments with which he defended it. The point was this. I had charged Mr. Holmes with having used this violent language, and I said how could he blame Lord Spencer for not suppressing meetings of the National League when at the time the Land League was first coming into strength he was Solicitor General of a Government which had not done anything to suppress their meetings? Lord Ashbourne defended him on two grounds—first, that the Land League was only at its commencement, at its inception and beginning, and that the House must recollect that we must allow such associations to run a certain length before applying drastic powers. In the second place, he said that the machinery required was not at the disposal of the Government with which Mr. Holmes was connected. Well, the National League is not at its beginning now; it is now matured; it has come to the time when drastic powers ought to be applied to it; and the machinery which Lord Ashbourne required is now at his disposal, and I have no doubt of the use which, if not to-day, then to-morrow, he will ultimately come to make of it. Then there is the right hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman). It is quite idle to talk of the right hon. and gallant Member as being unimportant, and still more idle to talk of his appointment as Under Secretary for Ireland, made in the very throes of the Crimes Bill, as unimportant. He is no novice. He is an Irishman who knows Ireland, and that was the reason he was appointed. Knowing Ireland he used those terms, on which I will not comment because they were very proper terms for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman in which to put forward his opinion, as an Irishman, of what was best for his country. He said when he took an oath on becoming a magistrate he took it to serve Her Majesty and to do his duty, and wherever he was placed he thought that his duty as a magistrate and lieutenant of a county was, instead of allowing Land League meetings to be held, to put them down by every means in his power as illegal and seditious. His duty wherever he was placed! Well, now the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was placed high, and he would do his duty. These were the opinions not of one or another, but of a very important section of the Irish Government. They have got a giant strength—will they use it as a giant? I think they will—I mean in the sense in which Shakespeare used the word. Even if they do not intend now to use their powers for the purpose of suppressing public opinion in Ireland they will inevitably be driven with rapid strides towards arbitrary government with all its sinister accompaniments. A Government which takes power to treat its political opponents as criminals will be obliged—if history teaches us anything—sooner or later, and probably sooner, to use that power. It was not so with the Crimes Act of 1882. That Act was very unpopular in Ireland, and I think that means were taken to make it still more unpopular of which I strongly disapprove. But, though the Act was very unpopular, most people were not so much shocked at the process by which Moonlighters and murderers were brought to justice as they had not themselves become Moonlighters and murderers. But it is a very different thing when you put down your opponents for political reasons. It is a challenge. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Yes; it is a challenge. I can assure hon. Gentlemen that if they took power, whether they use it or not, to punish members of the Liberal Federation as criminals, I should consider it a challenge, and that would be equally the case if we took such measures against a Conservative Association. [An hon. MEMBER: It is impossible.] Yes, of course; that is quite impossible. That is why you view with such equanimity the using of such powers against the Irish Members. Now, I can prove that that is the case, not by the precedents of a Conservative Government, but by the precedents of a Liberal Government. Why, almost the only argument, as opposed to the instances which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary cited, was the argument that the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) was responsible for the Protection of Person and Property Act of 1881, which, he said, was more arbitrary than the Act of this year. Well, it is difficult to conceive an Act very much more arbitrary than this, whether it is a suspension of the Habeas Corpus or not; but anything which this Act lacks in arbitrariness is made up in severity, because under the Protection of Property Act it was a case of semi-honourable and somewhat comfortable detention, in which—if I am rightly informed—a man lost nothing but liberty, and a most terrible and irremediable loss that is; whereas in this Act the punishment is severe, penal, cruel, and, as far as its authors can make it, shameful and degrading in the highest sense. But I will allow as freely as you like that the Government to which many of us on this Bench belonged passed an Act even more arbitrary than this. Now, I want to tell you what lesson I think should be drawn from that precedent. In the first place, we learn from it, by the experience of a Liberal Government—you are not happy enough yet to have learned it from your own—how arbitrary powers act. The Bill of 1881 was introduced, not by the men who think it their duty to put down the expression of free opinion in Ireland, but by a right hon. Gentleman who stated solemnly in the House that he wanted it for the purpose of checking village ruffians; but, unfortunately, in taking powers to check village ruffians, he took powers which enabled him to punish speakers at political organizations, political organizers, and editors, and he very soon had on his hands hundreds and hundreds of such gentlemen, until it came to this—that very nearly all the oratorical and literary talent of the Nationalist Party was locked up in different gaols in Ireland. No man less wished that sort of thing to begin with than did Mr. Forster; but he was driven to it by the inevitable result of having taken power to lock up his political opponents. In the next place, while the action of this measure as time went on became extremely harsh against political opponents, as a measure against crime it was deplorably ineffective. It did not stop crime. Nay, crime increased under it. There were 5,600 crimes in 1880; next year there were 7,788, and the crimes not only became more frequent but assumed a blacker hue, and that for a very natural reason. The common people, seeing criminals and politicians swept off under one common punishment, began to lose that horror and that clear and discriminating knowledge of the nature of crime which is the strongest preservative from it. This is not a new story in my mouth. When I was Irish Secretary I never mentioned the Protection of Person and Property Act except to state that the Irish Government acknowledged it to be a mistake. Are we to learn nothing by experience? Are we not only to repeat, but to exaggerate, the errors of the past? Because six years ago we entrusted to Mr. Forster powers to inflict the comparatively mild punishment for which he asked in order that he might use that power against actual criminals, are we now to entrust the power to inflict a most cruel punishment to a Government which contains some of the most important Members who conscientiously believed—not more than four years ago—that such power ought to be used for the purpose of stopping public meetings in Ireland? In May, 1882, Lord Spencer came into Office, and with him there came in a different policy. That policy I stated in Belfast—I am glad it was in Belfast—almost as soon as I set foot in Ireland. I said—

> "The fixed policy of the present Irish Government is to draw a deep line between what is criminal and what is political. With political writings and resolutions and with public meetings we do not care to concern ourselves; but against crime and outrage we have proclaimed and will continue to wage an undying and unrelenting war."

That, I am sure, is the intention of hon. Members opposite. It was with that object that we framed our clause relating to dangerous associations. The clause was framed specially for the purpose of including societies like the Invincibles, and excluding societies like the Land League and the National League. Now that policy was maintained—as far as frail human beings with such an enormous burden upon them can maintain any policy—without making serious mistakes. In some few cases out of the thousand decisions that had to be taken we did prosecute for what was said at public meetings and written in newspapers, and I think that some of those prosecutions were among the most questionable of our acts. But I wish the House most specially to note this, for it is the most important point. It was in the earlier days of Lord Spencer's Administration that the majority of these prosecutions occurred, and as time went on such prosecutions became infrequent, and, I think, then ceased altogether. Now, that was an exactly opposite experience from the case of the Bill of 1881, which resembled this Proclamation in its most serious particulars. The general scope of our policy was to deal with actual crime, and to leave political organizations alone. But it was not to the mind of some people in the House of Commons and a great many in the Press. Over and over again we were urged and pressed to put down the National League, and were told that if we could not do that with the powers we had we should take powers; and, whether we were right or wrong, we persistently and publicly refused to do so. In February, 1883, I said in the House of Commons—"Some people say that we ought to proclaim the National League; but that is not our opinion." Again, a year later, I said—

> "The Government were remonstrated with, because they did not prohibit all the meetings of the National League in Ireland. These remonstrances were made in good faith; but the Government could not listen to them favourably. They went to Ireland on two conditions. In the first place, they were commissioned to keep down crime and outrage to the best of their ability. . . . but they also went to Ireland to administer the country as one which was to be governed by and under Parliamentary institutions."—(3 *Hansard*, [284] 379.)

Well, that was our wish; it was our policy at which we tried to aim. And it was for such speeches as these, made continually and constantly and consistently, that the Conservative Press used to speak of me—*The Times* especially—as the Minister in whose time the National League was started, and grew and waxed strong. They used to say that I should go down to posterity with that on my shoulders, and there was only a short period during which they suspended their attacks, and that was during the few months of 1885 when the National League, in the character—which is now its main character—of a political and electioneering body, was doing its best to return Conservative candidates to Parliament. But, whatever may be said of the theory of the policy of punishing crime and leaving the National League alone, about the results of it there can be no doubt whatever. We found Ireland with 500 or 600 agrarian outrages a month; we left it in such a condition that when hon. Members opposite succeeded us they declared that they did not require the Crimes Bill at all. It was a successful policy; it was a rational policy; and it was a policy against which in this country, at public meetings and in Council, not one single word was said by right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite, who then were in the Government, or who are now supporting the present Government. There are right hon. and hon. Gentlemen in this House who, if they think they are doing right at a time when, in the words of the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain)—"Ireland is conspicuously free from serious crime"—who, if they think it right to take measures against the National League, will have to show why they did not remonstrate with me when, over and over again—at a time when Ireland reeked with serious crime—I stated that we would have nothing to do with interfering with the National League as a political body—as a body. But it would be a poor thing indeed to treat this matter exclusively as one with reference to which we have been consistent. [*A laugh from* Mr. Goschen.] The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer may laugh; but there is no doubt that I have proved up to the hilt that I was always and publicly opposed to a policy of interference with the National League. But, whatever objections I had in old days to interfere with the course which the Government had adopted, these objections have now reached the point of passionate earnestness in consequence of recent events. In the earlier days of the League, when we were nearer in point of time to the terrible revolution which shook Irish society in 1880, 1881, and 1882, I thought, and I said, that Irish politicians were aiming at their objects by un-Constitutional methods very frequently, and that their attitude towards the Government, when the Government was trying to suppress crime, from time to time, was deeply to be regretted and deplored. But then a great—and, I believe, permanent—change came over their words and their actions

—I am speaking of them as politicians—and, I believe, their convictions also. It is quite clear that the Conservative Government must have seen that change coming in 1885, or they would have renewed the Crimes Act. But the change has been hastened of late, in consequence of the fact that Ireland has now come within the circle of our national politics; that Irishmen look to political means for reforms and the redress of grievances, and that their object is no longer—as it was sometimes in the past—to defy, but to persuade and conciliate the great mass of their countrymen on this side of the Channel. If that be the case—and I am satisfied that it is—I will do nothing, and I will be a party to nothing, which can once again sow doubt and hatred and suspicion between the peoples of the two Islands. To have accepted the invitation that was pressed upon me to suppress the National League, when I was Chief Secretary for Ireland, would have been a blunder; to help you in proclaiming it now would be, in me—I do not say in anyone else—little short of a crime, and I earnestly trust that this debate will open people's eyes to what we are doing to-day. For this, the most momentous decision that Parliament has been asked to take in my time, is being taken with the least possible preparation of the public mind. The debates upon the Crimes Bill—upon which I will not now dwell—have done little to prepare the public mind upon the subject. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] I think the most important debate—that upon urgency—was held upon the question whether the Crimes Bill was wanted at all; and in Committee—for reasons which it would be most impertinent in me, not being in the House at the time, to try to define—the practical provisions relating to illegal associations, by far the most serious part of the Bill, were passed *en bloc*, with very little criticism, or without criticism at all; and upon the third reading, indeed, the House began to be aware of the tremendous issue to which it was committed; but by that time everybody had made up his mind to be an opponent of the Bill, or a partizan of the Bill, as a whole; and I hope we shall now decide, with open minds, and without any reference to any vote which we gave either upon the second or third reading of the Crimes Act, whether we will allow Ministers to employ a weapon which, had the forging of the latter part been conducted as minutely and as carefully as was the case with the earlier sections of this Act, I am satisfied would never have been placed by Parliament in its present shape in their hands.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I may say honestly that, although I feel compelled in the discharge of my duty to intervene in this debate, I wish, for many reasons, that such was not my duty. We have just listened to about the most extraordinary speech that has been addressed to the House of Commons for the last two Sessions. It is quite impossible to believe that the right hon. Baronet who delivered that speech was the same right hon. Gentleman who was the Chief Secretary for Ireland at the time to which he referred; that he was a party to proposing the Crimes Act of 1882, and was the speaker of certain speeches delivered not 18 months ago, to which I must call the attention of the House. In the fulfilment of my duty as a public man, I must criticize the conduct of the right hon. Baronet somewhat severely; yet I hope he will believe me when I say that it is with regret that I do so, valuing, as I do, the acquaintance of one whom I am not entitled to call my friend. I shall notice the main line of argument which the right hon. Baronet has addressed to the House, by which he indicated the supposed—for it is only supposed—difference of treatment of the National League by the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) and by the present Government. It must be by careful selection, and not by want of recollection, that the right hon. Baronet has been able to build up the argument which he has addressed to the House; and I should submit to the House that it is only by selection, only by picking out certain incidents in the career of the right hon. Baronet, that his argument can for one single moment be presented to the House. I must, at the outset, be allowed to notice a fallacy which, in my opinion, lies at the root of the right hon. Baronet's speech, and also of that of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. I venture to think that this fallacy has made the speech of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian last night and that of the right hon. Baronet of to-night possible. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian told the House, with perfect gravity and with great emphasis, that this Proclamation depended upon the concurrence of Parliament, and that it was a concurrent act of the Legislature and of the Executive Government. I hope I may not be considered impertinent; but I should have thought, before such an argument was used, it might have been asked of anyone in a less high position than the right hon. Gentleman—"Did you read the clauses of the Crimes Act before you made that objection?" I assert that the responsibility for this Proclamation rests upon the Executive Government alone; it is the Executive Government which have to make up their mind on the facts before them, and it rests upon their own conscience and responsibility whether such a Proclamation shall or shall not issue. The action of Parliament comes in, not for the purpose of concurring with such action, but of endeavouring to revoke it. ["Oh, oh!"] I am strictly accurate in what I say. The Proclamation remains an effective Proclamation unless, within a certain time, an Address is presented to Her Majesty. It does not require a lawyer to satisfy the House that that means that the action must be taken by the House at large, or by a section of the House, for the purpose of revoking the decision of the Executive Government if they can. If I might say so, with deference to the right hon. Gentleman and the right hon. Baronet, this is most important as showing they have entirely mistaken what was their duty in this matter, for they have not taken one single step to satisfy their own minds and consciences as to what are the real facts on which the Proclamation is based. The complaint of the right hon. Gentleman and of the right hon. Baronet, and it seems to have been suggested to them, is that it is enough to come down to the House and say—"You have not put, in the shape of statistics or Returns, the facts which are perfectly well known to everybody who will take the trouble to look into them; and therefore, because you have not done that, we will allege that we are justified in asking Parliament to revoke the Proclamation." The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian dropped a very unfortunate expression. In the course of his earliest opening observations, he said that the concurrence of Parliament was reduced to a mere form. His words were—"I am afraid I must say a mere imposture." I, myself, should not have ventured to use the word "imposture" had I not had the example set before me by the right hon. Gentleman. But, I ask, on which side of the House is the imposture? On which side of the House are the men who are trying to impose upon the House of Commons? In my judgment, they are upon that side of the House, where sit those who know perfectly well that they have only to walk six yards, nay, not six yards, to get the most accurate and perfect information of what the conduct of the National League has been and still is, and what are the intentions of those who support the National League. As far as we can tell from their speeches—as far as we can tell from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman last night—he and those who act with him have never moved hand or foot, and have never asked a single question, in order to ascertain whether the charges against the National League are well or ill founded, or whether they are justified. Hon. Members opposite have satisfied themselves and their consciences by saying—"We have not got the information in a tabulated shape; we have not got it in the shape of statistics, and therefore we may assume that it does not exist." The right hon. Baronet has appealed to us again as to the incident of the presents of white kid gloves, to the apparent freedom from crime, and has pointed to the absence of convictions at Assizes. But does not the right hon. Baronet remember the speeches of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian and of the right hon. Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), in which they pointed out that it was owing to the terrorism and tyranny which prevailed that persons could not be prevailed upon to give evidence? It is idle for right hon. Gentlemen opposite, who have relied upon those arguments, to turn round upon the Government and say—"You have not been able to get convictions at the Assizes," when they know perfectly well, as well as the Government themselves—aye, and better than they do in many ways—that the reason convictions are not obtained is because of the impossibility of getting evidence owing to the terrorism of the National League. Has the right hon. Baronet examined into the number of crimes and what has happened with regard to them during the last 15 months?

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: I have stated publicly, in writing and in speech, that had I been in the House I should have supported that part of the measure which I have always advocated as a method of detecting crime—namely, the Special Jury Clause.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: That is wholly beside my present argument; but I may now as well say what I had intended to say at a later period of my speech—namely, that the greater part of the right hon. Baronet's speech was in support of the Crimes Bill. I find in it half-a-dozen excellent and cogent reasons in favour of that Bill, and yet the right hon. Baronet is sitting side by side with those who, in the present Session of Parliament, have opposed that measure. The right hon. Baronet's complaint against Her Majesty's Government is, not that they have passed the Crimes Bill, but that they have not availed themselves of a particular clause of that Bill for the purpose of dealing with the particular evils which we are now discussing. It is to that part of the argument of the right hon. Baronet that I am endeavouring to apply my mind. I venture to submit to the right hon. Baronet that the reason which led the Government of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to establish different modes of trial when they desired to deal with a particular class of offence was identically the same reason which made it absolutely essential for Her Majesty's Government to proceed under Clauses 6 and 7 of this Act; because it is perfectly well known, and is scarcely denied by hon. Members below the Gangway, that we cannot get the evidence of persons who will not come forward in consequence of the terrorism inspired by the National League. In the nine months ending the 31st of March, 1887, there were 1,310 agrarian crimes. In 1,103 of those cases no one was brought to justice. In the same period there were 132 incendiary fires, and in 126 of those cases no one was brought to justice. There were 11 murders, in five of which no one was tried, and in one only was a conviction obtained. I want to know whether right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite would, if they were in this place, be satisfied with that state of things? And if the body of our case is such as I can satisfy the House it is, with regard to the impossibility of proceeding with Clauses 2 and 3 and 4 of the Bill, does it not show that it is the imperative duty of the Executive Government to take steps to put an end to this abominable state of things? The present condition of the National League is the real question which we are discussing. That is the issue of fact to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian devoted about eight minutes last night. That is the question of fact upon which I humbly submit it is the duty of right hon. and hon. Gentlemen opposite to satisfy their own minds, and not to rely upon information obtained by other people. That question of fact lies at the root of what we are discussing to-night. A most extraordinary statement has been made by the right hon. Baronet. He has said that the late Government so framed their policy as advisedly to exclude the National League from its operation. Has the right hon. Baronet forgotten the circumstance that they proclaimed a large number of National League meetings in the South of Ireland? What was the ground for that discussion which took place at the meeting to which the right hon. Baronet referred, and of which my noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty spoke? My noble Friend said in effect—"You have proclaimed National League meetings in the South of Ireland; why have you not proclaimed this National League meeting in the North of Ireland?" What was the reason given more than once by Colleagues of the right hon. Baronet? It was that these National League meetings—which, according to the right hon. Baronet's present contention, were outside the policy of Her Majesty's Government at that time—would promote outrage. That was the reason given. If in 1882 and 1883 it was the duty of the Government to proclaim meetings because they would produce outrage, why is it not the duty of the Government to proclaim them in 1887? Was it not the fact that the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) at that time got six months for calling the Government "banditti?" Is it not true that the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) was indicted for a speech which he made at Mullingar? Is it not true that Davitt—[A Home Rule MEMBER: Mr. Davitt]—that Mr. Davitt was imprisoned for saying that the cottiers of the West might swoop down on the rich lands of Meath? How does the right hon. Baronet reconcile his conduct with these facts? How does he reconcile these facts with the assertion which he made in this House but a few minutes ago that the policy which he was advocating excluded from its purview the National League? I come now to what in my judgment is a more important point. What is the character of the National League? What has been the character of the National League in the past; what is the conduct of the National League to-day; what is going to be the conduct of the National League in the future? I call the right hon. Baronet himself to witness upon this matter, and I think the House of Commons and the country were rather expecting that the right hon. Baronet, if he is now prepared to allow the National League to go scot-free in regard to what it has done in the past, would have offered to the House some explanations of the statements he made respecting the National League in 1884, 1885, and 1886. I have said at this Table more than once during my short career that I do not attempt to blame any hon. Members for changing their minds. But if they do change their minds on an important question like this, it is their duty to explain to the House their reasons for the change. We are now considering what is the real action of the National League. I venture, at the outset, to make two assertions which, if challenged, I can prove. I assert that there is a practical continuity between the Land League and the National League; and if it were necessary I could refer to the speeches of the present members of the National League, who have admitted it over and over again. Further, I assert that there has been no practical change in the conduct of the National League in the years 1883-4-5-6-7. It has been doing the same thing; it is doing the same thing to-day; and it will continue to do the same thing. When the right hon. Baronet made the speech which I am going to refer to, what were his sources of information? He was a responsible Minister of the Crown at the time, and enjoyed the greatest reputation in this country. He had, first, the result of his official experience in Ireland; secondly, a belief, which he expressed in honest and candid terms, that the official communications made by his subordinates in Ireland were trustworthy, and entitled to credit; and, thirdly, the newspapers from which we are bound to draw our information, and to which every Member of the House wishing to form an honest opinion ought to have gone, in order to see whether our story be true or not. Last of all, but by no means the least important, he had the knowledge of the conduct and speeches of hon. Members opposite below the Gangway, of the support they give to the National League, and of the way in which it is perfectly clear that those newspapers are inspired, and, I suspect, subsidized, by the National League, or, at any rate, they are under its wing. Speaking at Hawick, on February 9, 1883, with a sense of responsibility for what he was stating at the time, the right hon. Baronet said—

> "Last autumn an agitation began which promised at first to be legitimate, but a change in the nature of which the Government has watched with profound disappointment. Whatever the National League was intended by Mr. Parnell to be—whatever he himself, both at Dublin and Cork, has tried to make it—the Government are bound to inform itself as to what its character really is. As to that character there is no doubt whatever. Most of the earlier meetings of the National League were held for the purpose of conducting a fierce and undisguised agitation for three objects—the destruction of landlordism, the breaking up of grazing farms by terrorizing the larger tenants, and the separation of Great Britain and Ireland."

That was the National League of 1883. I call upon the right hon. Baronet as a witness. If the right hon. Baronet has changed his opinion let him say so. If the National League of 1883 was rightly described in those terms I assert that that is the National League of to-day. Now, let me read to the House another passage from the same speech, bearing upon the evils which we are determined to put down if we can. The right hon. Baronet said—

> "If the movement had been unchecked, in three months we should have had our worst difficulties all over again; the outrages would have been as numerous as ever; and the country would have been uninhabitable to any orderly or peaceable person."

And again—

> "There are many districts where the small local agitators live on money which is got under the name of political subscriptions, and which the farmers, as we are certainly and

authoritatively informed, will now only continue to pay under terror."

I crave the House to notice the last words "under terror." Now, Sir, I pass to a passage in a speech delivered at Hawick by the right hon. Baronet on February 10, 1883. He said—

"If you want to get at the truth you must never forget that there are two Irelands—the Ireland of men of all parties and creeds and ranks and callings, who, whatever else they differ upon, unite in wishing to preserve law and order and the right of every citizen to go about his business in peace and safety; and there is the other Ireland—the smaller Ireland, as I firmly believe—of the men who foment and condone and sympathize with crime. It is the gravest mistake to underrate the numbers and the claim to respect of the Party of Order in Ireland. It is not a political Party. It includes the great Liberal Party of the North, which, in all its essential features, resembles the Liberal Party in Scotland."

I wonder whether the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian remembered that passage when he said last night that an attack on the National League was an attack on the whole people of Ireland. The right hon. Baronet proceeds—

"The Party of Order includes every farmer who does not want to rob the landlord of his due, and who does not want to be forced to pay blackmail to agitation—every poor fellow who desires to be at liberty to earn a day's wages by whoever they are offered him, without being shunned, insulted, beaten, and too probably murdered."

What can be our opinion of the right hon. Baronet? What can be our opinion of his advocacy and his vote if we are able to show to the House that there is no ground for believing that the National League of to-day is different from the League of which he speaks?

SIR GEORGE TREVELYAN: That speech was made in the same month as in the House of Commons I publicly announced I would have nothing to do with proclaiming the National League.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Because I wish the right hon. Gentleman to enjoy the full right of interruption he must also allow me the right of reply. We are discussing the character of the League. What we say is that he ought then to have proclaimed the League; and we appeal to his own description of the National League. I do not intend to discuss whether the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues were right or wrong in not proclaiming the League; all I am here to do is to support the policy of the Government in proclaiming the League, though under another name, of which the right hon. Baronet spoke. I now come down to a speech no less than three years later, also respecting the action of the National League, delivered in the same place—Hawick. Speaking on the 5th of May, 1886, the right hon. Baronet said—

"The poor, the helpless, the uninfluential, the farmers and labourers throughout the South and West of Ireland, who, at a terrible risk to life and limb, insisted on fulfilling their legal obligations; the smaller and humbler officers of the law, who did their duty through the bad times, will now be left to the mercy of those who have not concealed their intention of paying them out whenever they can get a chance."

Under other circumstances I might discuss whether past acts of the same Government were right or wrong; but they are not worth the time of discussing them now. The only question now is whether the description the right hon. Baronet gives of the National League is correct. Has any right hon. or hon. Gentleman pretended to say that it is not? Why, the admission was wrung from the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) by the force of facts as to the resolutions to which we could have referred by hundreds had we chosen to read them. One more quotation, and I will gladly leave what has been to me by no means a pleasant task—that of proving out of the mouth of the right hon. Baronet that we have taken a just estimate of the conduct of the National League. The right hon. Gentleman spoke at Hawick on the 8th of July, 1886, and I am sorry to say that he has since performed the operation which in the course of his speech he thought impossible. This is what the right hon. Gentleman said—

"But he would not be beaten, for he believed they desired to be represented by one who, whatever his defect might be in ability or eloquence, at any rate was listened to in the House of Commons, because he was known to have an opinion of his own, to state that opinion openly, and to abide by it, whatever might be the consequences to himself. He had been asked to eat his own words which he had deliberately spoken as the result of his official experience in Ireland, and to place the lives and property of shopkeepers, land agents, and the humbler officers of the law, of the loyal and law-abiding people of Ireland into the hands of those who had never mentioned loyal or law-abiding people without a sneer."

Now, that has a bearing on the discussion whether the power of the League ought to have been proclaimed by the Government of which the right hon. Gentleman was a Member. It may be that in the earlier days of the League it was not so powerful, or in a position to do such mischief as it has since done. Can we adopt a fairer standard than that of the right hon. Gentleman's expressed opinion, formed as the result of his official experience in Ireland? That conviction was expressed by the right hon. Baronet at a time when it was his interest, if he could, to patch up his differences with the National League, and his conscience would not allow him to do it. Let us now see what the real position of this matter is; but I will first make one frank admission to hon. Gentlemen opposite. I have never been to Ireland, and I am not well able, therefore, to pronounce their beautiful Irish names; but it does not require a visit to Ireland to appreciate what is going on there.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Or a visit to the moon.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: I suppose the hon. and learned Gentleman's observation has some reference to Moonlighting, for I do not see what other subject it can relate to. Hon. Members below the Gangway and hon. Members opposite seem entirely to have lost the point of our argument; they seem to forget that one of our main complaints is that the publication in these newspapers of the names of individuals under certain circumstances is an actual and ingenious mode of intimidation, and that the publication of the names is one of the means by which the intimidation makes itself felt. If it were necessary I could call attention to some newspapers, and notably *United Ireland*, illustrating this, and if hon. Members desire I will read them. I have selected 24 papers which, so far as I can judge by reading the contents, are either Nationalist organs, or under Nationalist auspices, and my belief is that it is clear that a number of them could not exist without a subsidy and support from the League. ["No, no!" *and* "Not true!"] The list of papers is as follows:—*United Ireland, Kerry Sentinel, Leinster Leader, Munster Express, Kilkenny Journal, Tipperary Nationalist, New Ross Standard, Wexford People, Sligo Champion, Tuam News, Western People, The People, Roscommon Herald, The Nationalist, Dundalk Democrat, Tipperary Advocate, Enniscorthy Guardian, Midland Tribune, Clare Examiner, Munster News, Skibbereen Eagle, Anglo-Celt, Carlow Nationalist, People's Champion, Kerry Evening Post.*

An Irish Member: They are not all Nationalist papers.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: With one exception.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: I leave the two Representatives of Ireland to settle the matter between themselves.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: This Gentleman (Mr. T. W. Russell) is a Scotchman.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: My argument from these newspapers is this—that not only in 20 or 30, but latterly in hundreds, and I might say thousand of instances identically the same methods of tyranny, oppression, and of terrorism, Boycotting, interference with lawful acts, and the compelling to commit unlawful acts, have been pursued for a period of 12 or 18 months throughout Ireland. I want to know on what ground hon. Gentlemen opposite say that we as a Government, when these facts are brought to our notice, supported as they are by confidential communications, should put them aside and regard them as nothing? Does the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian suppose that if in half-a-dozen English counties it was well known and recognized that a similar thing existed, anyone would rise in this House and say the whole thing was to be regarded as a fancy, and not to be believed? There is, first, espionage, and then we know what follows espionage. The right hon. Member for Mid Lothian said last night that we could not possibly produce the evidence upon which we act, because it would not bear the light of day. Does the right hon. Gentleman not know, with the evidence of these hundreds and thousands of League resolutions before him, what would be the result of publishing the details of these cases? Does he say that the resolutions passed with the knowledge of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, and for which they are morally if not legally responsible, do not mean what they say, and are all bunkum, and are not enforced by those who pass them? We are astonished at the change which has come over the opinions and conduct of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. What is the reason that has led to this? I was very much struck the other day by a speech made by one of the most distinguished men in this House, which I will venture to quote. He said—

> "Has it come to this in England, that the presence of 86 Parnellites in the House of Commons is not only to paralyze Public Business, not only to make and unmake Ministers at pleasure, but to compel English statesmen to swallow their most sacred pledges, to be untrue to their deepest convictions, and to yield to Irish bluster and their own craven fears?"

I say with very great respect to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian that the only reason why he can bring himself to wink at, palliate, and almost to excuse the things he rebuked last year is this—that it is absolutely essential, in support of his Home Rule schemes, that he should do so in order to obtain the assistance of the Irish Members if he desires to have anything of a following behind him. The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) challenged the Government, and said—"You have given a great many cases; but you do not show that in any of those cases injury to property resulted from those resolutions." The hon. Member could hardly have listened very attentively to the speeches of the Chief Secretary or the Solicitor General for Scotland, or he would have noticed that in those speeches several such cases were mentioned. The same charge has been repeated by the right hon. Baronet (Sir George Trevelyan), and probably he will give me his attention while I repeat three or four instances out of many others which I have at my command. Let me mention just a few cases in which it is clear there has been both cause and effect. There was one in County Galway, where a tenant of Sir Henry Burke, on the 5th of July, paid his rent in order to avoid eviction; on the 10th of July he was denounced by name at a National League meeting; on the 19th of July his stack of turf was burnt down. I think the right hon. Baronet is right that if we tried those men we would not have sufficient evidence upon which to get a conviction; but that does not excuse the Executive for not putting a stop to those things if they believe the National League responsible for them. John Power and another man worked for Sir Henry Burke; on July 23 they were summoned to a meeting of a branch of the National League, and called upon to explain their conduct by Martin Egan; Power was expelled, and Lawrence Egan, one of the committee, said—"Every good man would know how to deal with him." Two days afterwards three of his ricks were burnt down. Has the House the slightest doubt as to the cause of that? It is perfectly plain that if in five, 10, or 20, or a larger number of cases you see one thing follow on the other, any honest man would say the one must be the cause and the other the effect. We cannot bring it home to the National League direct—there is the difficulty—but can any sane man doubt the connection? These things must be put a stop to, and the Government intend making the experiment. At any rate, we will see if stopping the National League meetings does not stop the burnings? The last case of injury to property following condemnation by the League which I will quote comes from Listowel, where, on the 30th of April last, a local branch of the League had passed a resolution strongly condemning the conduct of several persons for reverting to "the old and disastrous evil of land-grabbing." Immediately following that all the fences of one of the tenants named are pulled down, and on May 10 a notice is put on his door, "Down with the grabber;" and in the notice it is stated he will dangle from the rope—[*laughter*]—and a picture of a gallows was drawn. All these threats which are made by the League and its members may be all very fine fun for hon. Members below the Gangway—the Home Rulers—and some right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Opposition Bench, but the poor man who is the object of the threat does not regard them in that light. He knows that murder has been committed as the result of these threats; he knows that cattle have been tortured and slain, and he believes, with justice, that such things might happen again. Can we help wondering in the face of such facts that the right hon. Baronet (Sir George Trevelyan) should describe the League as he has done? If we have this kind of cumulative evidence before us, it shows that the right hon. Baronet was right.

There are, I believe, some 70 or 80 Members of the National League in this House. If those responsible Members of the League had risen in their places after my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary had related the acts for which we consider the League should be suppressed, and said—"We condemn all this; it is despicable and horrible; we will not allow such things to be done again; you now tell us what they have done, but we did not know of it; we will punish those branches of the League which have been guilty of such conduct"—if the members of the League in this House had got up and made a statement of that kind the House might have believed they were not aware of what had been going on. But in the absence of any such statement it can only be assumed that the proceedings of the whole of the branches were known to hon. Members of that House who belong to the League. I refer the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian to those 70 or 80 witnesses below the Gangway as to the accuracy of the inferences I have drawn. I feel now obliged to refer to the language of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) at the Rotunda on Tuesday last. He said that if the operation of the League in the past be correctly described as intimidation, he intended to practise and preach the same doctrines over and over again. And if anyone was base enough to turn his back upon the fight, he pledged himself he would denounce him from the public platform by name, and let that man be who he might, his life would not be a happy one in Ireland or across the seas. Now I want to know what could the hon. Member for East Mayo have referred to except the same class of things which we have been proving to exist, and if he referred to those things he is condemned by the language of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) last night; by the description given of the League by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow; and he is condemned — I admit with very faint condemnation—by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. That a man's life would not be a happy one under the circumstances referred to by the hon. Member for East Mayo, either in Ireland or across the seas, must be obvious to anyone who has listened to this debate, and we think our duty to be that this should be put an end to.

MR. T. C. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour): If the right hon. and learned Gentleman had read the passage preceding he would have seen——[*Cries of* "Order!"]

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The hon. Member is perfectly under a misapprehension.

MR. T. C. HARRINGTON: I am not.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The hon. Member (Mr. Dillon) can read any other passages of his speech, and I shall leave the hon. Member to judge whether they are an amelioration or qualify what I have read. It is a distinct reference to the couduct of the League in the past, and a determination to practise the same conduct in the future. The Government, as I have said, take it to be their duty to put and end to that, and I have on a former occasion stated that no crime or threats of crime will deter us from that duty. I will quote the opinion of a right hon. Gentleman on this point—

> "The first duty of a civilized Government in dealing with an organization which has been nursed in robbery and murder, and which subsists at the present on the moral torpor of the law-abiding citizens of Ireland, is not to dally with it, to bargain with it, and to ask for its support, but at all hazards at once to put it down."

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Who is that?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: That is a quotation from the senior Member for Central Birmingham (Mr. John Bright). The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian misunderstands me. The senior Member for Birmingham refers to this being an association which has been nursed in robbery and murder, and I would remind the House of a single passage which was read last night by the right hon. Gentleman from the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), in which in even stronger language the same thought was expressed by the right hon. Gentleman himself.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Is this about the National League?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: That is really a distinction without a difference. Boycotting is what the right hon. Gentleman is referring to. I assert that we have proved our case that the National League Boycotts up hill and down dale.

And if this Boycotting be the engine, the instruments are the people. Mr. Speaker, the Government are told that this is to be a death struggle. In that death struggle Her Majesty's Government or the National League will go down. We welcome the battle. We have no fear in the matter. We are supported by the consciousness that we have done our duty in this emergency. At any rate, whether we go down or not, a very important step will have been taken towards establishing the Government of Her Majesty the Queen, and retaining law and order in that part of the United Kingdom, which ever will remain, I trust, a part of the United Kingdom. Liberty has been appealed to. If this horrible engine of the National League, not as a political association, but in its really worst form, is suppressed, there will then be a dawning of that liberty which every subject of the Queen is entitled to enjoy, and which, as long as Her Majesty's Government are in power, they are determined to the best of their ability to support and maintain.

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour) said, as one who since the inception of the National League had had the chief responsibility of working the organization in Ireland, it was his duty to say something in the debate. So far as his feelings were concerned, and if he could consult his own wishes, he should much prefer to fight the issue with the Tory Coercionist Government in Ireland rather than in the House of Commons, and he hoped that no Party in the House of Commons would consider that any of his statements in defence of the branches of the League or of the organization in general should be taken in any way as an endeavour to prevent the fight which Her Majesty's Government was so anxious to enter upon; but he felt it was a duty due to the Representatives of the people of England, Scotland and Wales who had taken up the cause of Ireland in that House that the Irish Members should reply to the arguments—if they could be dignified by the name of arguments—which had been advanced by the other side of the House, and to offer some reply—faint as the opportunity given for it—to the calumnies which had been hurled at the Irish Members and also at the whole Irish Nation by a Coercion Government who now for the first time saw the iniquity of the National League, though it could not have been less iniquitous when they were in sympathy with it and used it for their own political purposes. The speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) was a condemnation of the speech they had heard last night from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour); and a condemnation also of the Proclamation of the Land League. The hon. and learned Attorney General's speech was from beginning to end an endeavour to prove that in the National League of Ireland there was a sympathy with crime—an encouragement of crime. If that was the case, and if the Government had proof of the fact, why had they not the courage of their convictions, why did they not declare in their Proclamation that the League was in sympathy with, and aided in crime? The Government had done nothing of the kind. Instead of that the Privy Council passed over all the clauses of the Act relating to the aiding and abetting of crime and proclaimed the League on the ground that it interfered with the action of the law and had incited and encouraged intimidation. The whole organization of the League—which was larger than any which had before existed in Ireland, more extensively spread, he believed, among the people, more representative of the people's character and feelings than any political organization in Europe at the present time—that whole organization was to be condemned upon mere anonymous stories brought forward in that House in the course of debate, and which they had no opportunity of testing. If there was any duty more incumbent than another on a Chief Secretary for Ireland it was that sifting, and carefully sifting, the information on which he relied in a matter of that kind. What opportunity had the right hon. Gentleman of sifting that information? Did anybody who had seen the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman ran away from every question affecting the Government or the administration of the law in Ireland, who knew that he was the only Chief Secretary who never condescended to attend to Irish Business, believe that he was able to form a correct opinion of the character of the men who gave him information or to apply any test of its value? If there was anything that was more calculated to exasperate the people of Ireland and excite in their minds feelings of hatred against the English system of Government it was the fact that right hon. Gentlemen like the Chief Secretary and the hon. and learned Attorney General—who had never been in Ireland and who knew nothing of the condition of the people, could stand up and allege base crimes against the people and traduce their leaders. It was even more offensive to their feelings to have insulting and calumnious charges made against them by the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Scotland (Mr. J. P. B. Robertson), who was, if possible, still more ignorant of Irish affairs than the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He wished to put before the House what a matter of difficulty it was for him, or for any of his Colleagues, to follow the statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, because the right hon. Gentleman only last night for the first time gave them those facts. These statements could have been given to the House a week, a month, or three months ago if the right hon. Gentleman had not been afraid that in the interval they would be disproved. The hon. and learned Attorney General said these facts were broad and plain and well-known. If so, they must have been known to the Attorney General for Ireland and to the Irish officials, and if the Government did not want to snatch a vote dishonestly why did they not give those facts to the House and the country before? Out of the 1,800 branches of the National League the right hon. Gentleman had been only able to quote 25 cases in which branches appear to countenance intimidation. Those 25 branches had not met simultaneously on the same day; the cases quoted were spread over a period of three months; and so hard up was the right hon. Gentleman for an argument to establish his case that he actually quoted one branch of the League three times by way of extending the number. He mentioned the Kilmacow branch of the League three times in different parts of his speech, as if there were three distinct offences. But if there was a refractory branch of the National League at Kilmacow with which they could not deal, would it be more easy for the right hon. Gentleman to deal with it when there were no more reports published of its proceedings, when the public evidence which those men furnished of their unreasonableness and their inconsiderate action was abolished, and the right hon. Gentleman had only to deal with what they did in secret, and which he and his police would never be able to get at? The right hon. Gentleman had quoted from newspaper reports and also from official information, but he forgot to tell them whether what he quoted from official information was one and the same in any instances with what he quoted from newspapers. Thus they had no means of testing whether he did not multiply his cases by giving them over and over again from his different sources of information. Some humour at the expense of the Irish people and the National League's organization had been caused by a reference last night to an allegation that the Kilkenny branch of the League had expelled a man who took his own farm. Now he himself had received a telegram from a member of that branch of the League. The people of the several districts to which the right hon. Gentleman alluded would only hear of his words long after the vote of that House had been taken, and the persons whom he had calumniated—several of them worthy clergymen and other members of the National League, who only desired to live in peace, but were not allowed to do so—would only read his calumnies after the verdict of that House had been cast and the scourge had been applied to them; therefore, the Irish Members laboured under considerable difficulty in meeting the charges. He had received that day the following telegram from the Mayor of Kilkenny:—

> "Mr. Balfour said that Thomas Ryan's name was struck off from membership of the Kilkenny branch of the National League. As a member of the branch and as Mayor of Kilkenny I vouch that no such incident ever occurred."

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I quoted from *The Munster Express*.

MR. T. C. HARRINGTON said, *The Munster Express* was published in a county as far away removed from Kilkenny as it could possibly be. But the right hon. Gentleman did not quote from *The Munster Express*—he quoted from official information. The telegram goes on to say—

> "Nor was the name of any member struck from our list, and no such case as that stated by Balfour ever came before our organization."

Take another instance mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman from official sources. In his endeavour to accuse the National League of having a sympathy with crime and moonlighting, and to prove that intimidation was practised in order to force men to become members of the organization, the right hon. Gentleman stated by way of proof that on the 17th of January a party of Moonlighters visited 15 houses in Kerry, and compelled the inhabitants to become members of the National League or threatened to take their lives. The right hon. Gentleman at first omitted to state that the incident occurred in Kerry. It was only after interruptions from the Irish Members that the right hon. Gentleman stated where the incident occurred. Later in his speech the right hon. Gentleman stated that 16 other houses had been visited on the 7th of February—presumably they were in Kerry—and with the same object of compelling men to become members of the National League. He had taken the trouble to look up the charge of Judge O'Brien at the Spring Assize in Kerry. If those two offences had taken place they would have, beyond all doubt, been seized upon by a learned Judge who had ever been as anxious as the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) to calumniate the Irish people. The Constabulary, too, would have been bound to report to the Judge, and the charge would have been on the official paper before him; and with a statement of that nature before him a Judge who had tried to blacken the character of the Irish people, who had tried to force the hands of the Government to bring in such legislation as that they were now considering, would have been eager to seize the opportunity to publish the fact before the world as a charge against the Irish people. But no such reference had been made in the speech of the Judge. He was able to prove that the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was an absolute falsehood. He cared not from what source the right hon. Gentleman got his information or who the official was with whom the right hon. Gentleman came in contact. He branded the statement as a lie, and the official who supplied it as a paid hireling whose duty it should have been to supply the truth. He had examined the Returns of agrarian crime for the period mentioned—for the entire quarter ending March 31. In Kerry, where those 31 cases of visiting were said to have occurred by the right hon. Gentleman's private informer, the Official Report presented to Parliament showed that in all there were only 26 agrarian offences, 10 of them being cases of intimidation. Only two cases of attack upon dwellings were mentioned for the whole quarter; and yet in the lapse of a fortnight the right hon. Gentleman stated that 31 houses were visited in order to compel the inmates to become members of the National League. That was the kind of official information which had been supplied to the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was quite pathetic over the Boycotting of a certain gentleman named Mr. Justin M'Carthy. If hon. Gentlemen would refer to the evidence in the Blue Book of the Royal Commission they would find that the evidence of this Mr. Justin M'Carthy was included; but, in order to produce a good effect, and make a case out against the National League, the Commissioners were so anxious to save Mr. Justin M'Carthy from identity and trouble that his evidence was given anonymously, and his evidence was headed with a dash instead of his name. He (Mr. T. C. Harrington) challenged the right hon. Gentleman the first time he was speaking, and he challenged him now, to go back to the source from which he got the information referred to about Mr. Justin M'Carthy, and he would promise him—and he was stating this with as firm belief as he had of his own existence—that the person who concocted that story, or from whomsoever the right hon. Gentleman got it—the person who originally invented the story was none other than the famous Mr. Samuel Murray Hussey. The right hon. Gentleman had not uttered one sentence of that very graphic picture which he drew of the case of Mr. Justin M'Carthy when he (Mr. T. C. Harrington) recognized the style of Mr. Samuel Murray Hussey. He might have not got it from Mr. Hussey, but he would not dare to deny ~~that~~ the person who gave him the information got it from Mr. Hussey. He knew there could be no doubt of it, because he heard Mr. Hussey tell the tale himself. He heard him at the late Assizes at Tralee jesting about the particulars of that very case. It had been alleged against the National League, and it was insisted upon with very great force by the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Scotland last evening, that intimidation was had recourse to by members of the National League for the purpose of compelling men to become members of that organization. He wished to draw the attention of the House to the early observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in reference to that matter. Some time ago he made the very same statement in that House, and he (Mr. T. C. Harrington) stood up in his place and said if any branch of the National League passed resolutions declaring that they would publish the names of their subscribers or non-subscribers, that branch would be suppressed by the central authority, or by him who was in charge of it. The right hon. Gentleman stated that he was deceived. No; on the contrary, he (Mr. T. C. Harrington) asserted that it was the right hon. Gentleman himself who was deceived. The right hon. Gentleman quoted the cases of three or four resolutions passed by the branches stating that they would publish the names of their subscribers; but the right hon. Gentleman did not quote a single case, and he could not quote a single case where a branch did publish the names. He (Mr. T. C. Harrington) maintained that this fact completely established his case. The moment his attention was drawn to it he interfered with the branch. He could not prevent the passing of a resolution; but the moment it appeared in the public newspapers that moment his censure, and that of those who co-operated with him, was conveyed to the local branch. He defied the right hon. Gentleman, or anyone who followed him in that debate, to shatter one word of the statement he made some time ago in that House, or to show a single case where a branch did persevere in the publishing of those names. He was not going to say, or attempt to say, that in a great organization, a branch of which he supposed was established in almost every parish in Ireland, from the difficulties thrown in their way by the interference of the police and the authorities, and their not having as free a hand in its government as they would have in any other Constitutional country, that there might not have been a case of irregularity; nay, there had been cases of irregularity. But this he did say—and he asserted it without the slightest fear of contradiction—that there never was a case of unjust Boycotting of that kind, or of unjust interference with the liberty of men brought under his notice or the notice of those who co-operated with him, that they did not dissolve the branch or dismiss the secretary or officers who were responsible for it. Take a case in point. A resolution was adopted on the 21st of February by the Macroom branch of the National League, stating that they would publish the names of their subscribers, and ask the traders to place their cards of membership in their windows. Everybody who was acquainted with local affairs knew that men, for trade purposes, might be able to succeed in getting a resolution of that kind adopted. What was the action taken by them? A statement was forwarded to them by the secretary, who stated in his letter that there was a difference of opinion in the local branch on the subject. A letter which he (Mr. T. C. Harrington) wrote on that occasion had been telegraphed to him that afternoon. Here was a copy of this letter on the subject to the secretary in reply—

> "It is a practice wholly opposed to the spirit and policy of the National League, and upon no account can we give it countenance."

The Secretary endeavoured to defend the resolution, and in reply he (Mr. T. C. Harrington) wrote again condemning it, and saying—

> "Your letter simply amounts to this—that where this policy has been adopted, the membership of the branch of the League has been increased. On behalf of the Organizing Committee of the National League, I have to tell you we do not value the assistance and services of men who may be thus brought into membership of the branch, and we know perfectly well that they are men who cannot be counted upon in troublesome times, and if the practice of placing the National League cards in the window or publishing the names be not discontinued, I should of course have to bring the matter under the notice of the Organizing Committee, and have your branch formally dissolved. It is a most objectionable practice, and I do not think it could be too highly con-

> demned as a practice quite at variance with the spirit of our organization, and at best it can only be looked upon by me as a trick of trade."

He thought that that language was quite as strong—in fact, he ventured to say much stronger than any of the hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench would address to the Secretary of a political organization with which they were connected. He challenged them to say if they had ever condemned the practices of the Primrose League in language nearly as strong as that. Now, as to the scandalous imputations that the National League bribed certain newspapers, he begged, on behalf of the Press of Ireland to repel that insinuation with scorn and indignation. He branded the statement as a false calumny upon Irish journalists. He thought nothing could show more clearly the great imprudence of one in the position of the right hon. Gentleman than the hazardous statement which he made with reference to the reputation of a number of hon. Members of that House, and some 24 or 25 Nationalist journalists in Ireland—namely, that the National League had subsidized Nationalist newspapers. That was a policy which the Tory Party had adopted in the past. Every newspaper mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman was established in Ireland before the League was established. He stated positively that not one penny of the funds of the National League had ever been given for the support of any newspaper whatever. Even the bare duty of paying the ordinary subscriptions for newspapers sent to the office was not discharged. They were sent out of sympathy with the organization. When an hon. Gentleman occupying a seat on the Government side of the House went over to Ireland in the early days of 1885, when the Tory Government was in power, he availed himself readily of the assistance of the National League. He could give the right hon. Gentleman proof of what he said, and their organization then, as now, used its best efforts to put down crime, and to expel from the branches of the National League anything like unreasonable conduct. An English Member who sat for an English constituency on the Government side of the House was so impressed with the truth of what he said that when in the course of a visit to Ireland he learned, probably from Lord Carnarvon, how the influence of the National League had been cast, and what it was doing in Ireland to extirpate crime, he asked him (Mr. T. C. Harrington) would he have any objection to meet Lord Carnarvon, and have a conference with him. He believed that some other confidential messages of that kind were sent to one or two other hon. Members. He would not have said anything about the subject were it not that efforts had been made by hon. Gentlemen on the Government Benches to blacken their character. He would also call the attention of hon. Members to an article that had appeared in *The Irish Times*, a paper which was a staunch supporter of the Tory Government, expressing its strong approval of the course taken by him with reference to the Waterford branch of the National League in the case of Alderman Smith.

> "He would keep out of their ranks," it said, "every man who did not feel called upon to expose himself to the risk of being misrepresented, attacked, and injured in his business."

If anything had been established more clearly than another, it was that where there had been interference by the National League with the liberty of any person, it had been with regard to those who were members of its own organization. Every case that had been mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman was a case in which the National League had been dealing with men who were members of the organization. The hon. and learned Attorney General for England had quoted cases of ricks of turf being destroyed. Well, this was a course which had been frequently resorted to by the owners of the turf, because they knew that the landlords who sat on the Grand Jury, and out of whose pockets the county cess did not come, would give the applicant three times the value of his turf because he falsely stated in his evidence that he was Boycotted. They knew how the system worked in Ireland. They were not going to say that malicious injuries of that kind might not be committed; but he ventured to assert that fully 50 per cent of cases of that kind which came before the Grand Jury were cases in which the men had deliberately destroyed their own property, and when they set up a false case to the landlord Grand Jury, who did not contribute a single penny of the money they gave for compensation—[An hon. Mem-

BER: Mrs. Lucas.] His hon. Friend reminded him of the case of Mrs. Lucas, the wife of a magistrate in County Cork. He was not sure whether her husband sat on the Grand Jury—at all events, he might have done so, being a magistrate —when the claim for compensation for the burning of Mr. Lucas's house came on. The Lucases made three applications for compensation, until a policeman who was protecting the house proved that Mrs. Lucas herself was the person who burned it. The Lucases, however, had got compensation for injuries done to the place three times before that, and probably the lady was so encouraged by her success that she determined to make a fortune out of it. He should not like to be understood by any section of the House as denying that branches of the National League had expelled persons from membership, and that they—the Irish Members—had not interfered with them for expelling men from membership who had taken farms from which others had been unjustly evicted. He would not wish anyone to understand that he was giving any denial to the statement that branches had so acted in that respect. That was a policy they had not condemned, and which they would not condemn. Knowing how ready the Irish landlords were to minister to the hunger of the people for land, knowing how the landlords in their rapacity had profited out of that unfortunate hunger on the part of the people for land by setting one man to outbid another, he would rather see Home Rule, with all its blessings, deferred than that they should be taken for one moment as consenting to the policy of land-grabbing. They did not deny that branches had expelled from their organization men who took farms from which others had been unjustly evicted; but this they did deny, that where a man, through his own want of industry, or because he was a spendthrift, was not able to keep his farm, was evicted—they denied that any branch of the National League, with their sanction, endeavoured to entertain a case of that kind. If any branch did such a thing it was certainly in direct opposition to their instructions. But where an unfortunate tenant, after doing all in his power, was unable to pay the rent which their own Commissioners had proved that they could not in reason or justice be expected to pay, they had done all in their power, after a tenant had been unjustly evicted, to prevent others from rushing in and endeavouring to pay enormous rents for these evicted farms. What they had done in the past, with the full strength of their organization and with their people well organized and disciplined, depend upon it they should still continue to do in spite of the Proclamation of the Government. The Government could go on with their wretched policy of imprisonment and prosecution; the Irish people were all accustomed to it, and for himself he was more proud of having been in gaol four times in defence of the liberties of his fellow countrymen than he was of being a Member of that House, and he should, if in the discharge of his duty and without giving way to violence of language or giving any just reason for imprisonment, be more proud of being another time in prison than he was of occupying a seat on that Bench. They despised that sort of policy, and they had no respect for the motives which prompted it. They believed the Government were forced to this action. The hon. and learned Attorney General for England might say that the Government entered upon the policy with light hearts. No, they did not; but, on the other hand, the members of the National League entered upon the fight with light hearts because they had always been at it, and this was only another tiff in the struggle. For them and for their people the struggle had no terrors, and if it was to be a life and death struggle, as had been prognosticated, between the Tory Government and the National League, he could promise the Government that before the League was suppressed the former would go down in ignominy. The National League meant the people of Ireland. The Government might quote a few instances of absurd, extravagant, or extreme resolutions which they—the Irish Members—had condemned in the past, because it was easy for them to condemn them, and they had been able to check and control the action; but the Government by the course they were taking would render this impossible in the future. The course the Government were taking that night would give a freer rein to those who proposed rash counsels. A resolution of the character quoted might be carried by a very small majority; but to the Government it was all the same, and they attacked the whole branch. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had only been able to quote 22 instances—unauthenticated—out of a total of 1,800 branches spread over the whole country, and yet they attacked the character of the whole organization all the same. Did they think they were going to succeed in exterminating the organization? They might as well try to put down the National League and the principles which animated the National League as to enter upon the task of taking one by one out of Ireland every Nationalist in it. They had already proofs that the attack of the Government on their organization had brought to it strength it had not before. It had brought into their ranks many men who hitherto did not wish to take part in the struggle, but who could not stand aside when they saw it was a struggle between a miserable Government—driven on by a wretched clique of rapidly diminishing landlords in Ireland—and the people. When they saw it was a struggle of that description, between the Irish people and the Government, the men who had hitherto stood aloof were rapidly entering the National League. The hon. and learned Attorney General had hinted that the Government would render it impossible to compel men to subscribe to the National League. He would give a challenge to hon. Members on those Benches opposite. He would invite them to watch the receipts at the fortnightly meetings of the National League while the present policy was to continue. He would invite them to watch those receipts now and when the Crimes Act and their Proclamation were in force, and to see if, however long they might allow the League to continue, the subscriptions had not doubled instead of decreased. He had already to propose for membership at the next meeting of the central branch more members than he had had in any two months previous to the enforcement of the Crimes Act. The Government might, if they wished, prevent public meetings of these branches in the future—though he very much doubted whether they could—but if they did it would only be at the risk of wrecking any character which they—the Government—had endeavoured to maintain, and in the end they would be exceedingly sorry they had entered upon a struggle in which defeat would stare them in the face. The Irish people would hold on steadily to the organization which had been their salvation in the past. There might be irregularities in some of the branches, and he admitted there were, because he had sometimes felt the difficulty of controlling them; but the years of experience he had had in the government of the National League had convinced him of the capacity of his fellow-countrymen for Home Rule. Nothing in the world had convinced him of that fact more, because the instances might be counted on the fingers of one hand where on his appeal to any of the branches they had refused to obey him. Did the Government think they were going to obey them? Depend upon it the Irish people would trample upon their Proclamation. The Irish people would despise the Proclamation and despise the motives which prompted it. He could tell the Government that the Irish people were prepared for the fight, and if, as the hon. and learned Attorney General had said, it was to be a life and death struggle, he (Mr. T. C. Harrington) could promise them it would be one in which neither the Irish National League nor the Irish people would be worsted.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) said, that the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington), who last addressed the House, had made a protest against the policy of the Government towards the organization of which he was one of the principal and controlling members, and he attempted to invalidate the instances of intimidation and Boycotting which had been brought forward by the Government to support their policy. Whether he had done so was of small moment, because he (Mr. Macartney) thought that admissions such as the hon. Member had made were sufficient to justify the Government in the course they had adopted and to justify him (Mr. Macartney) in supporting their action. The hon. Member had made one statement which had surprised him (Mr. Macartney) very much. He understood the hon. Member to say that in controlling the principal branches of the National League in regard to the use of their powers of expulsion and with regard to exercising government with regard to the people in a given locality, those powers were exercised only with regard to members of the branch or branches. He would quote, for the information of the House, from *The Sligo Champion* of the 23rd July, 1887, the report of a local League meeting, at which the chairman brought forward a scheme for more energetic action with a view to increasing the members of the branch. He reported to the meeting that seven members of the branch had failed to attend the periodical meetings, and that one member had not put in an appearance since he had been elected, and he suggested that the members should go round the district and induce men to join. Then he found it stated that those who still refused to join the branches should have their names submitted at the next meeting, and published if considered desirable. Only one member at the meeting objected to this proposal; but eventually it was decided that people should be called upon to join the League. So recently as the 17th day of August last a meeting of the Rathmure branch of the League was held, when it was stated a tax of 1*d.* in the pound must be levied on the district, and it was decided to publish the names of subscribers and non-subscribers to the local branch. Now, these were facts which the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin could not get over. At the same meeting it was decided that members of the branch should bring their influence to bear on men to join the organization—a proof that influence or intimidation was exercised not only upon members but upon non-members. Turning now to the speech of the right hon. Baronet (Sir George Trevelyan, he (Mr. Macartney) was immensely suprised at the position which he had attempted to establish with regard to the action of the Government. The right hon. Baronet based his objection to the policy of the Government upon the action and policy which he, as Chief Secretary, and Lord Spencer had endeavoured to carry out in 1882, after the establishment of the National League. But the allegations which the right hon. Baronet made were quite different from the course which he adopted in conjunction with Lord Spencer. Then they put down political meetings in the South of Ireland in districts where lawlessness and crime were rampant. But they allowed them to take place in the North of Ireland, where there was no crime. It was in consequence of this policy on the part of Lord Spencer and the right hon. Baronet that the Loyalists of the North assembled in 1883 in Ulster to protest against the National League being dangerous to society. The right hon. Gentleman, when Chief Secretary, spoke at Belfast on the 24th August, 1883, and he then said that the Government would not interfere with legitimate agitation, and on the 4th of September *The Times* reported a meeting that had been held at Cork in consequence of the declaration which had been made by the then Chief Secretary in Belfast. That meeting established for the City and County of Cork a fresh agitation. *The Northern Whig*—the leading journal in Ireland—then belonging to the right hon. Gentleman (Sir George Trevelyan's) Party, traced the agitation in Cork to the speech of the Chief Secretary at Belfast. That was the time when the right hon. Gentleman set up the policy of the "even keel," which he had subsequently given up. Speaking at that time, the hon. Member for Fermanagh (Mr. W. Redmond), who was not then a Member of that House, had referred to the question of Boycotting——

MR. W. REDMOND: Quote it, please.

MR. MACARTNEY said, it was a speech which the hon. Member delivered in favour of Boycotting, and it was referred to in *Hansard.*

MR. W. REDMOND: Where was it made?

MR. MACARTNEY said, he could not inform the hon. Member just at present; but he would refer the hon. Member to *Hansard,* where he found it. The hon. Member in that speech said that any man who, being a member of the National League, proved untrue to it should be Boycotted, and he advised those present to use, moderately and wisely, the expedient weapon of Boycotting against those who were false to the National Cause. He hoped they would work in order to become untrammelled by any shadow of British law, and this could only be brought about by the sword and the mighty arms of the Irish people, not only in rebel Cork, but in other parts of Ireland. He advised them to prepare for the revolution. The attention of the then Chief Secretary (Mr. Trevelyan) being called to this and other speeches of a similar character, he made a statement in which he said—

> "Questions relating to the treatment of speeches made on public platforms are absolutely the most difficult, and those which require the most consideration, both on grounds of policy and on grounds of law, of any questions which can be laid before the Government. I will, therefore, take this opportunity of saying that the Government have directed their earnest attention to the speeches of Mr. Davitt, of the hon. Member for Wexford, and of Mr. William Redmond. . . . . Their conclusion is that if such speeches continue to be made there is no hope for peace and order in Ireland. It is impossible to keep crime in check by any system of punishment as long as speeches like these are made, which, from whatever their intention—and I say nothing about that—experience tells lead to crime and outrage. If the speeches made at public meetings of the National League are continued in the same strain as those made during the last week, I shall feel it my duty to recommend the Lord Lieutenant to exercise his power under the Prevention of Crimes (Ireland) Act, and prohibit these meetings."—(3 *Hansard*, [275] 372-3.)

Such was the statement made by the then Chief Secretary, on November 30, 1882, and now the same right hon. Gentleman, having submitted that as the policy of his Government, came down to the House and refused to give his assent to the action of the present Government in proclaiming the National League as a dangerous association. He was supported by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), who had adopted to the full the policy that underlay the action of the National League; but in a very characteristic manner he had refused to recognize hard facts, and had endeavoured by a series of fine phrases to palliate the deeds that had been done. He had endeavoured to dress up the policy of public plunder with attributes and arguments founded on the claims of public liberty. His late Colleague had to complain in June, 1886, of his tendency to disregard facts and rely on fine phrases, and the House would agree that the capacity of the right hon. Gentleman for coining euphemistic expressions for disagreeable facts was exercised to its highest extent on Thursday evening. He justified or excused what he called the practice of exclusive dealing; but to compare Boycotting to exclusive dealing was perfectly illusory. It did not represent Boycotting in the slightest degree, or convey an idea of the hardships or discomforts under which the victims of the system suffered. The right hon. Gentleman forgot the graphic description of it he himself once gave to the House, and had allowed to lapse from his recollection that description of Boycotting that proceeded from the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) when first he preached its principle. He appeared to be utterly oblivious of how, from National League platforms, Boycotting was impressed upon the people of Ireland, asking them to make it a living death to those who would not accept the dictates of the League. The descriptions of the hon. Member for Cork and the hon. Member for College Green went far, far beyond the limits of exclusive dealing, and reduced the life of a man subjected to the system admirably described by a rev. platform orator of the League as a "living death;" but now the right hon. Gentleman declared that the Proclamation of the National League went perilously near what was described by Sir James Graham as an "act of war on the Irish people," and in the same breath he asserted that the League had 500,000 members. That might be so; but, on the other hand, it was a matter of common notoriety to those acquainted with Ireland that the majority of the remaining 4,000,000 of people were heartily sick of the policy of the League, and would be only too ready on the first opportunity to discard its principles. This opportunity they had never had up to this moment. The evidence given before the Cowper Commission showed there was only too much reason for the people to suppose the law gave them no protection against the dictation of the League. It was an undoubted fact that the law required to be strengthened, not only to cope with the policy of rapine and disorder, but to protect it against the assaults of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian. If the law happened to be ineffectual in the future, it would be because the right hon. Gentleman had devoted himself to debauching the sanctity and authority of law in the eyes of the Irish people. The right hon. Gentleman went on to accuse the local administrators of the law as not being in sympathy with the Irish people. This was an ambiguous phrase. If it meant they had no sympathy with Moonlighting and marauding, undoubtedly it was true. Then he renewed his familiar reliance on the credence of Sir Redvers Buller, who said that the National League was the salvation of the people against brutal Irish landlords, and fortified himself with a quotation from the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), that there had been "little or no reduction" of judicial rents in Ulster. A letter from Archbishop Walsh, published on July 18, had some reference to that point. He pointed out that, taking the whole period of the years from 1882 and 1885, the percentage of reductions in Ulster was a little over 20 per cent, in Connaught 20 per cent, in Munster 18 per cent, and in Leinster 17 per cent; whereas the percentage of reduction in the official years 1885-6 were—in Connaught a little over 27 per cent, in Leinster 24 per cent, in Munster 23 per cent, and in Ulster the same as in the former period. So in the early days of the operations of the Land Commissioners the reductions in Ulster were as large as in the other Provinces. Then, again, the evidence of the Sub-Commissioners, Messrs. Rice, Horton, and Bomford, went to show that Ulster landlords had made substantial remissions, and had taken into account the depression of the times. The Proclamation of the League was necessary, because its primary object was one that certainly could not be obtained in a Constitutional manner; because if its platforms were to be conducted in the future as in the past, there was no hope of peace and order being restored to Ireland, and because submission to the League, threatened by the organs of the dynamite party in America, would be disastrous to every class and interest in Ireland. The Government had taken the only possible action in at once putting in operation the powers given them by Parliament.

Mr. W. REDMOND (Fermanagh, N.) said, that as an Ulster Member, he had listened to the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macartney), also an Ulster Member, with regret, for he failed to hear from him any justification for the outrageous insult that was about to be perpetrated on the people of Ireland. In such a case as this it behoved every Irishman to join in a protest. The hon. Member, however, appeared to be satisfied with the knowledge that the Orange Society, of which he was a member, would not be proclaimed under the powers of this Act. Yet owing to the action of that organization the streets of Belfast had been stained with innocent blood. It was said that the National League was to be put down because it promoted intimidation; but the Orange organization was guilty of immense intimidation in Ulster, and was nevertheless to be let alone. So enraged were the Orangemen at his last election for the County Fermanagh that Viscount Cole proceeded to preach a crusade against the Catholic people of that county, telling his fellow-Orangemen that the time had come when the Catholics should be driven from the county, and counselling them not to give work or let land to any Catholic. There was a distinct incitement to Boycotting and intimidation; but since it emanated from a Tory Orange Lord the Government had nothing to say against it. While the Government was suppressing the League with one hand they were patting the Orange Society on the back with the other. One of the meanest features of the action of the Government was that it was plain that they intended to cripple the work of Nationalist Registration Societies which were worked by the National League. What would they find at the next Election in places like Fermanagh, where Parties were pretty equally divided? They would find the organization which supported them proclaimed and its meetings dispersed at the point of the bayonet; while the Orange organization, with its powerful influence and unscrupulous tactics, would be in full swing in the same county at the same time. The whole case against the National League was founded on Boycotting. No one could say that there was any ordinary crime in Ireland to justify the Proclamation of the League. On the other hand, nobody would deny that Boycotting in certain cases was not only justifiable, but absolutely necessary for the existence of the people. The landlords did not like Boycotting because they found it to be directed principally, and almost solely, against land-grabbing. Right hon. Gentlemen had referred to instances of the turf of men being burned because they would not join the National League.

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY for IRELAND (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet):

I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I never said anything of the kind.

MR. W. REDMOND said, he did not refer to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. He referred to the Chief Secretary. He did not think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was worth referring to. It was impossible to know where to find the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. He was once a Home Ruler, and the secretary of the Home Rule League in Dublin with his (Mr. W. Redmond's) father, and now he sat on the Tory Benches. No one with common sense would quote the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. The Chief Secretary had cited instances to show that men had been Boycotted for not joining the National League. But no one knew better than the hon. Member for North Armagh that Boycotting had been used almost exclusively against land-grabbers, not against men who would not join the National League. The National League would not be bettered by having men enrolled against their will, because they would be a weakness to it rather than a source of strength. He did not think any Member would deny that Boycotting, properly carried on, was the only remedy for the curse of land-grabbing. Boycotting had been introduced with a view to prevent the eviction of men who were unjustly rented and who could not pay, and for that purpose it was not only justifiable, but absolutely necessary. The allegation that the people were compelled to join the League by intimidation was pure humbug. Would any organization suffer itself to be hampered by unwilling recruits? And how did those who believed in this doctrine of intimidation account for the adhesion to the League of Irishmen in England, America, and Australia? Even *The Times* had not attempted so monstrous an impossibility as the production of a single person who could affirm that he had been compelled to join the League. The Irish people had never been afraid of anyone; but if they were being intimidated by the hon. Members for Cork and East Mayo, would not their feelings towards those Leaders be as rebellious as their feelings towards the Chief Secretary? The real reason for the Proclamation of the League was the hope of the Tory Party that it might induce the Irish people in a state of desperation to commit acts which would place them in the wrong in the eyes of the civilized world. The organization, which had been founded in the interests of the people, was at present impregnable because it was peaceful. That was the consideration that induced the landlords and the bigots of the Orange Society to strive to impel the Irish people to the commission of crime. If the meetings of the people were dispersed crime and outrage would inevitably follow. At the present time the leaders of the people would not tolerate for a moment any crime nor any form of Boycotting which was not absolutely necessary for the prevention of land-grabbing; but if the League was suppressed it would not be in the power of any man to prevent the spread of what might be termed guerilla warfare in certain parts of Ireland. There would certainly be retaliation upon the police. At the hour of the Proclamation of the League there was peace in Ireland. He trusted that the bloody *régime* that would follow the suppression of the League under the Law of a Tory Government would be contrasted with the present peaceful *régime* of the League itself. The Irish people were being insulted and treated in a cowardly manner, for they had not the same means of vindicating the rights of their country which were possessed by their fathers, who did not spare their blood in the defence of their native land against the power of England. If they had the power they would rather fight for their rights. But they could not do that, simply because they had not the power, and the efforts of the Irish Members were devoted to getting the people of Ireland to work with the Constitutional weapons within their grasp, and with which they believed they would win if they were not now wrested from them by the Government. He did not envy the position of this country to-morrow morning, for the news would then be sent to the uttermost ends of the earth that England, with her vast power, wealth, influence, and traditions, was about to engage in the brave pursuit of hunting down and casting into gaol a poor, suffering, and unarmed people.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON (Lancashire, Rossendale): The hon. Member who has just sat down has used language which will not, I think, greatly tend to convince the House of the Constitutional character of the National League. The hon. Member has just informed the House, as I think he has done on former occasions, that it is nothing but the hopelessness of the insurrection that prevents him and his friends from having recourse to other methods for freeing his country from the English domination, and I do not know that that confession will greatly predispose the House in favour of the Constitutional, legal, and legitimate character of the association, which is, according to the view of the hon. Member, the only substitute in the power of the Irish people for armed rebellion. But, as I have not had the advantage of listening to the whole of the speech of the hon. Member which led him to this conclusion, I will not venture to detain the House by referring further to the subject.

MR. W. REDMOND: May I explain that what I said was that the past grievances and sufferings of the Irish people had been in the past so great, that their pain and anxiety have been so intensified by the insult and tyranny of this Bill, that I believe so great is their suffering that if they had the means in their power they would take any means to free themselves from the intolerable burden the Government are now putting upon them; and I further said that it was the object of the exponents of the National League in this House to teach the Irish people that their rights are to be won by Constitutional methods, while it is the object of the Tories, with their Coercion Acts, to drive them to other courses.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have already acknowledged that I did not hear the whole of the argument by which the hon. Member led to his conclusion; and, therefore, having referred to it, I will not further comment upon it. The speech of my right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) has been so fully commented upon by the Attorney General that it is not necessary to say much more upon it. But I think that the House will have heard with some surprise the expressions of favour which fell from the right hon. Gentleman in regard to several portions of the Crimes Act. For instance, the right hon. Gentleman spoke on several occasions in terms of considerable approval of the 2nd and 4th sections of that Act, which he seemed to think might have a most salutary effect, and I gathered from his remarks that there was nothing in that Act to which he could take great exception, unless to the 6th and 7th clauses, with reference to which discussion is now going on. I do not know whether these opinions of my right hon. Friend upon the subject of the Amendment of the Criminal Law in Ireland were fully and accurately known to the electors of the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow, and, if they had been, I must confess that I have some doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman would have secured all the support he did from the Irish electors of that Division, or would have secured the active support of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) if his sentiments on the subject of the Crimes Act had been fully and accurately known. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to devote the whole of his argument to what he considered to be the want of proof of connection between the operations of the National League and the commission of crime and outrage. The right hon. Gentleman examined at considerable length some of the cases which were brought forward last night by the Government, but he examined them all by the light of this supposed want of proof. There have been times, as my right hon. Friend has been reminded, when he has not scrupled to draw pretty close and sharp inferences as to this connection between the National League and actual crime and outrage in Ireland. But that is not the point now. My right hon. Friend has said nothing, or nearly nothing, on the subject of intimidation; and almost all the cases and the quotations which were brought forward on the part of the Government last night were cases, not of actual crime and outrage, but of the intimidation which is alleged to prevail in many parts of Ireland, and of the tyranny under which a large portion of the Irish people are suffering, and of the abject terror which that tyranny has produced among them, and of the ruin and loss which that tyranny has carried with it. My right hon. Friend has not attempted to deny the allegations which are made on the subject of that intimidation. He appears to think that there are no acts in support of this system which could not be made the subject of investigation before a legal tribunal. My right hon. Friend's Irish experience must have made him perfectly aware that the difficulty of proceeding before any legal tribunal in Ireland, even if composed of two Resident Magistrates only, is the difficulty of procuring evidence. He must be aware also that the more complete and the more fully established is the system of intimidation and tyranny, the more difficult is it to procure evidence of any kind before any tribunal for the purpose of establishing the complicity of the accused with any overt act. The right hon. Gentleman said that what the House required was a complete and sustained argument why the policy pursued by Lord Spencer and Lord Salisbury in 1885 should be discarded. My right hon. Friend said that Lord Spencer had always declined to proceed directly against the National League, that in 1885 Lord Salisbury had declined to ask Parliament for any exceptional powers, and he asked why that policy should have been discarded? It does not appear to me to require a sustained or lengthened argument in reply. I do not think that it is necessary for us at this time to enter into the question whether Lord Spencer and Lord Salisbury were at the time justified in the policy they then adopted. The question is whether that policy was a successful policy, and whether so successful that it ought to be implicitly followed by the present Government. My right hon. Friend has claimed credit for the policy of the Government of Lord Spencer, and has urged that that policy was successful in reducing crime. I believe his contention on that point is perfectly true; but it is equally true that the Government of Lord Spencer did not succeed in putting a stop to intimidation practiced even then by the various branches of the National League. It is equally true that with the lapse of the provisions of the Crimes Act, and at the present moment that intimidation and tyranny are more rampant, more frequent, and more organized than at any previous period. It seems, therefore, to me that it requires something more than the authority of Lord Spencer and Lord Salisbury to convince the House that the policy which they adopted at a former period, and under different circumstances is to be implicitly followed now. My right hon. Friend appears to think that any association ought to secure immunity if it has a political aim. I entirely agree with my right hon. Friend that in so far as the objects and action of any association are political, and only political, that action ought no to be interfered with. But if the action of any association, whether political or otherwise, becomes destructive of the liberty and freedom of the people of any country, if it becomes subversive of the principles of order and of good Government, then it seems to me that it does not matter whether the professed objects or even the real objects of that association are political or private, or are of whatever character you choose, so that the operations or actions of that association are hostile to the peace and good order of the country. In the few observations that I shall make to-night, I shall take it for granted as at all events decided by the present Parliament in the present Session that a good many points more or less have been discussed during these debates. If the debates of Parliament are to lead to any result whatever, if Parliamentary Government is to be continued in any shape, we must at some time or other arrive at a stage when, so far as Parliament, at all events, is concerned, some subjects must be taken to have been decided in debate—if debates are not to be interminable and there are not to be interminable Divisions—I shall take it for granted that the House has by its authority decided that in Ireland intimidation to a very great extent does prevail, that persons are prevented from fulfilling their legal obligations and from pursuing their lawful avocations, and that the chief agent in that system of intimidation has been, and is, the National League, and that it has been proved that the ordinary powers of the law are insufficient to repress that intimidation, and that it is necessary that the Government shall be armed with additional powers in order to deal with that intimidation, and to repress it. I shall also assume, that it has been decided that among these additional powers must be included the power to deal, not only with overt acts and actual offences, but also with the organization and mechanism of the association, which is assumed to be the bottom and foundation of this intimidation. If we take this point to be decided by previous discussion in debate, the question which we have now to deal with, although a very important one, is not a very wide or complicated one. It seems to me to be simply this—whether this House will interpose its veto upon an Executive Act of the Government? It is not a question any longer of the Crimes Act, or of its necessity. That policy has already been decided by Parliament, and powers have been confided by Parliament to the Government which enable it to proclaim, and, if it thinks fit, to suppress, the National League, or any of its branches; and the question now is whether Parliament will, on the invitation of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), intervene with its veto to prevent the exercise by the Government of the powers which have been deliberately entrusted to it by Parliament. I must take exception to the argument of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian last night, when he asserted, at the very outset of his speech, that the provisions of the Act made Parliament a party, either active or passive, to the action of the Government in this matter. That, Sir, would in my opinion, have been the effect of the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler), which required that the actual proclamation by the Government of the National League should be confirmed by Parliament. But that is not what the Act has provided. That is a proposition which was made in this House, and which was negatived; and it appears to me impossible to contend, as my right hon. Friend contends, that the effect of the provisions of the Act, as it stands, are identical in effect with that which would have been their effect if the Amendment which was rejected by the House had been accepted. I hold, therefore, that this is not a case in which Parliament is necessarily committed by the action of the Government to approval of their action. It was necessary for my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian to make this contention, and to urge his contention, because it was the only foundation upon which he could support the charge which he subsequently proceeded to make against the Government of withholding information which they ought to have placed upon the Table of the House; but I hold that it was not the duty of the Government to place on the Table of the House such information as my right hon. Friend desires. The Crimes Act, much as my right hon. Friend may dislike it, is now a part of the ordinary law of the land. I believe that statement cannot be controverted; and any action which is taken by the Government under that Act is an Executive act of the Government, taken on its own responsibility, and taken under the same circumstances, and under the same conditions, as any other Executive act which the Government may perform. Sir, it is not necessary, it is not customary, for the Government to produce evidence in support of every Executive action which they take on their own responsibility. It is for those who challenge the action of the Government in regard to the issue of the Proclamation to show cause why that action ought not to be taken; and it is for those who challenge the issue of this Proclamation to show why the terms of that Proclamation are in any respect incorrect, and to prove that the National League is not a dangerous association which interferes with the due administration of the law. If the Government had come to this House, and asked the sanction of the House to its proceedings, then I do not say that it would not have been their duty to lay on the Table of the House such information as has been asked for; but it does seem to me that if they had taken that course in the present instance, they would have been asking the House to give its sanction to this action, and that they would have been evading the responsibility which rests upon them, and can rest upon them only, and would have been asking the House to share with them the responsibility which, under the Act of Parliament, this House does not possess. Therefore, Sir, if any responsibility is going to be taken by this House in this matter, it seems to me it will be by the action of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian, and not by the action of the Government, that the House will have been invited to take a share in the responsibility. I do not know that I should have troubled the House with any observations upon this question had it not been for some extremely inaccurate and misleading statements which have been put forward with an air of some authority as to my own position and the position of some of my hon. Friends in this matter. It has been said that neither my hon. Friends nor myself have ever been consulted by the Government on this subject; that we have been taken by surprise; that when we learned the decision of the Government we addressed to them a strong remonstrance; and that I have subsequently expressed my opinion that the action of the Government is ill-advised, dangerous, and unnecessary. Now, Sir, it is perfectly true that upon other questions of policy—especially on questions of legislation and questions of the Business of this House—I have been, and my hon. Friends have been, from time to time consulted by Members of Her Majesty's Government, as, I believe, it is the practice of every Government to consult every section of the House by which they are supported. And it is also true that upon this question we have not, to my knowledge, been directly consulted by Her Majesty's Government. I was, however, perfectly aware that the question was under the consideration of the Government; and I have from time to time taken the opportunity of pointing out to Members of the Government what appeared to be some political and Parliamentary difficulties in the way of this procedure, and of indicating a preference which I believe my hon. Friends as well as myself would both entertain for procedure under other sections of the Act if, in the judgment of the Government, such procedure would be adequate and sufficient. It is absolutely untrue, however, that since the period of the Proclamation I have expressed to any person, or in any place, any opinion whatever as to its expediency. I believe that in this matter the Government have felt—and I have perfectly understood their position—that this is a question which differs very much in character from other questions of policy or of legislation upon which it was perfectly reasonable and perfectly natural that they should take into council any portion of the House on whose votes they rely for their continuance in Office. I understand the Government to have felt that this was not a question of policy alone, but that it was a question of the Executive duty of the Government, under that Act of Parliament which has conferred upon them certain powers to be used upon their responsibility, and upon their responsibility alone. They felt that this was a matter upon which they were bound to act on their own judgment, and that that judgment could not and ought not to be influenced by the opinion or the wishes of any of their friends sitting in any part of the House. But, Sir, the agreement which I have expressed with the Government in that view of the case constitutes no reason, in my opinion, why my hon. Friends on this side of the House are bound to vote for the Resolution of my right hon. Friend. I hold that no vote of this House is required to enable the Government to act. I hold that no vote of this House can acquit the Government in advance for the responsibility and the consequences of their action if their action is wrong; and as I hold these opinions, I also hold that it would be in the highest degree inexpedient and unwise on the part of the House by a vote to discredit and damage in advance the authority of the Government, and to deprive them of that Executive discretion which it has been the intention of an Act of Parliament deliberately passed to give them. I think it would be unwise on the part of the House to prejudge this question. I believe that the Executive acts of the Government can only be judged after a sufficient lapse of their results, and I believe that the Government, for their action in this matter, as in all other matters, must await the ordeal which, sooner or later, they must undergo for their action before the constituencies. I think it would be in the highest degree unwise on the part of this House, unless it entertained the strongest opinion—the strongest conviction—of the impolicy of the course on which we are entering, to interfere with the discretion of the Government before time has been given to the House to judge of its results and consequences. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian entertains, undoubtedly, a strong conviction of the impolicy of the course on which the Government are entering, and no one can therefore complain that he should challenge the opinion of the House. But, Sir, as I differ entirely from my right hon. Friend in regard to the policy itself, and as I entirely sympathize and agree with the objects at which the Government are aiming, I can be no party to giving a Vote which shall dissent from the mode of operations which they have adopted, simply because I think it is possible that an alternative and another mode of operation might have been adopted. Sir, if I have any doubts upon the subject of this policy they are doubts which are inspired by very different considerations from those which appear to have influenced the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian. My right hon. Friend now thinks that the objects of the National League in Ireland are wholly to be approved; my right hon. Friend has said that the objects of the National League are not only of a laudable, but almost of a sacred character, while at the same time he has observed a larger discretion as to some of the methods employed by the National League. Now, Sir, I have the misfortune to differ from my right hon. Friend as to the objects pursued by the National League; I believe those objects to be, to a very great extent, aimed at spoliation and injustice, and as to the methods which are employed by the National League, I believe them to be mainly intimidation, defiance of the law, and the oppression of every one in Ireland who disagrees with them. As regards my opinion as to the methods of the National League, I am happy to think I am not very much in disagreement with my right hon. Friend himself. My right hon. Friend quoted two witnesses in favour of the National League. One was Sir Redvers Buller, whose evidence has been so often referred to that I will not trouble the House with it again. The other witness was my hon. Friend the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell). What was the passage in the speech of the hon. Member for South Tyrone that my right hon. Friend thought fit to quote? It was—

> "In Leinster, Munster, and Connaught outrage and intimidation had done their work, and there had been reductions for rent."

Upon that my right hon. Friend said that the hon. Member had indicated three of the provinces of Ireland in which there had been reductions of rent, and it was only in those three provinces there had been "effective action by the League." Therefore, in the opinion of my right hon. Friend, the effective action of the National League has been outrage and intimidation. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, Sir, if my right hon. Friend does not wish to indicate outrage and intimidation as the methods pursued by the National League, it appears to me that he has been somewhat unfortunate as to the witness he calls to speak to the merits of the National League. If I have any doubts as to the policy, I say they are not doubts inspired by the considerations which appear to have actuated my right hon. Friend; if I have any doubts they are simply as to the procedure which has been adopted by the Government. I do not know, I do not feel convinced that the time has yet come when it is necessary, or when it can be proved to the satisfaction of the majority of the people of this country to be necessary, for the Government to resort to the extreme power which has been conferred upon them. I do not know, I do not feel convinced that they will be supported by the people of this country in this as firmly and as certainly as they would have been had the failure of all other means of procedure already been proved. I should have preferred, if it had been possible, that the Government should have resorted to the provisions of the 2nd and 4th clauses, and that at any rate experience should have been gained as to the impossibility of acting under those clauses before the last resort had been been had recourse to. But, Sir, my doubts are doubts as to the procedure adopted by the Government, and the procedure only. With the aim, with the object which they have in view I heartily and entirely sympathize. As to the justice and legality of their procedure I do not entertain a doubt—I have never entertained a doubt—that they are perfectly justified by the facts which they have before them, and which in part they have produced in the course of this debate, to proclaim, and, if necessary, to proceed to the suppression of the National League or any branch of it. I am not going on this occasion to refer again to what has been so often discussed, to the proceedings or to the character of the National League, to its connections or to its alleged connection with crime, and to the nature of the oppression which it is said to exercise, or to the justification for its proceedings if justification can be offered. Last my case entirely upon facts which I believe cannot be disputed, and which I do not think are ever denied. They are facts which are not only not denied, but which are positively boasted of by Irish Members of Parliament. Whether for good or for evil, for the purpose of promoting justice or for defeating justice, whether by lawful or by criminal means, it cannot be denied that the League has acquired an ascendency in Ireland, incompatible with the existence and with the efficiency of the Government as established by law. I hold that there is neither in Ireland, nor in any other country any room for two Governments. I believe that the National League does act as a government, and that it has assumed many of the functions of government which are, in relation to the daily life of the vast majority of the people, the most important functions that can be assumed by any Government. It is even boasted, not unfrequently, that the National League is in Ireland the more powerful of the two Governments. The other day the Lord Mayor of Dublin, at a meeting in that City, hurled defiance on the part of the National League government at the Government established by law. On the same occasion, the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) said that if any man should at that time back down and retire from the fight, he would denounce him from the public platform, and that the life of such a man would not be a pleasant one in Ireland. In other words, the hon. Member for East Mayo announced that he would make Ireland too hot a place for his political opponents.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to say that I never said anything of the sort. What I said was this—if the noble Marquess will allow me to state it. I was referring to estates on which the Plan of Campaign was enforced, and I said that if any man played the coward on these estates in face of the Coercion Act, I would denounce him. I spoke of a traitor, and a coward turning his back on the course of the people after committing himself to it; but I never spoke about making Ireland too hot for him.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The hon. Member said that if certain persons—I do not care who they were—if certain person backed down and retired from the fight he would denounce them, and that their lives in Ireland would not be happy. My point is, that if the ascendency and the authority which the National League at present possesses are retained, it is in the power of the hon. Member for East Mayo to make good that threat, and I say that that is a power that no individual, that no league, that no association ought to possess. I say that it does amount to a declaration that he will make Ireland too hot for certain persons whether he classes them as his political opponents or not—that he will make Ireland an intolerable abode for those who come under his displeasure—I say that it is the business of the law and of the Queen's Government to make Ireland too hot for criminals, and for criminals alone, and that it ought not to be in the power of any individual, whatever his position may be in any country, to threaten with too much probability that he will be able to perform his threats, that he will make Ireland intolerable to any portion of Her Majesty's subjects. In my opinion, I say there is not room in Ireland for these two Governments. If we think the government of the National League is a better, a more just, and a more expedient government for Ireland than the Government by law established, let us put this government in power, and confer upon it the responsibility that ought to go with power. But that we or, at all events, the majority of this House have not arrived at that conclusion hon. Members will not dispute. Let us not permit any body or association, however organized, however designated, whatever its objects may be, to usurp any of the functions which ought to belong only to the Government that is established by law. For these reasons I shall vote against the Resolution which has been proposed by my right hon. Friend. I do so, because I believe that my right hon. Friend is asking the House to interfere unnecessarily and prematurely with the Executive action of the Government, and with the powers which Parliament has deliberately conferred upon, and which Parliament must have intended them to use on their responsibility. I believe that if we agree to the Resolution moved by my right hon. Friend we shall be depriving them of that authority, and of those powers which Parliament intended them to use, and which, if they are deprived of them, they can no longer be held responsible for the peace, good order, and good government of Ireland.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): We have listened to a speech, I think, the most important, and I may also be allowed to say the most extraordinary, and which is likely to bear the most pregnant fruits in the future history of this country and of Ireland. There can be no doubt—and we all recognize it—that my noble Friend occupies a position of the greatest responsibility in this House, and, by the great and deserving influence that he exercises, a position of the highest responsibility in the country. It is known over England that the step we are taking to-night, for good or for evil, is full of fate for the history of Ireland and of this country. And what is the advice which my noble Friend gives to the United Kingdom upon the decision that is before us to-night? Sir, he endeavours to show that he is not responsible. He was not consulted; but he has indicated, so far as he communicated his opinion, that he thought it was an unwise proceeding. That is his judgment—his calm and deliberate judgment; and there is no man whose deliberate judgment is more respected by this House and by the country than is that of my noble Friend. He says that this House is not responsible. That must be a great comfort to the House; it is a comforting doctrine, considering the views he entertains of this matter and of the course the Government have pursued. It would be a great consolation to me if I thought this House was not responsible. Sir, my noble Friend has only said in more diplomatic phrase what was said by another of the "responsible" politicians last Saturday on this subject. He said—

> "You are probably aware—it is an open secret—that the Liberal Unionist Leaders made strong representations to the Government in this sense."

In what sense? In the sense of the opinion that my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) had expressed—namely,

> "I am afraid that the course the Government has pursued is one which will land them in the greatest difficulty, and even danger."

That is the opinion which was conveyed to the Government by the Leaders of the Liberal Unionist Party, and they have disregarded that advice. Well, I do not blame the Government for disregarding that advice, because when they get advisers who will always vote with them, whether they take their advice or not, they are quite right to treat that advice with the respect it deserves. The Liberal Unionists are a small Party; but they are an illustration of a law of nature which shows the infinite desirability of matter, and to-night I believe they will be resolved into their original atoms; some of the atoms will vote with the Government, the other atoms will vote for the Resolution of my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian. Such is the Unionist Party. Well, my noble Friend says he is not going, by his vote to-night, to approve of the course of the Government. He says he would not prejudge. That is not what you call very warm sympathy; that is not very cordial support to people who are entering upon such a struggle as the Government are now about to enter upon. The noble Lord will not interfere with their discretion—he has told us he does not think they are discreet—but he will not interfere with their discretion. Well, I wish I could embrace his opinion that the House is not responsible; I should be very glad to think that the Government had the whole responsibility, and if we could take the view that we could judge them after the event. But I do not think that my noble Friend has studied with his usual care the Statute upon which this proceeding arises. He says, and says truly, that the acts of the Executive Government are not necessarily or naturally brought before Parliament; that they do not lead to the tribunal of Parliament, although they are subject to be challenged by it. That is a perfectly sound doctrine, which I absolutely accept; but is that the situation in which the Statute has placed us? The 4th sub-section says this—"Suppose Parliament were not sitting; in the case of any ordinary act of the Executive Government, that act would take effect and would operate, whether Parliament were sitting or not." In this case, with this Proclamation, what does the Act say?

> "Whenever any special proclamation is issued under this Act, if Parliament be then separated by such adjournment or prorogation as will not expire within twenty days, such special proclamation shall be deemed to have expired at the end of a week from the date thereof, unless Parliament be summoned within twenty days from the date of the summons."

This act of the Executive Government

actually perishes unless Parliament is summoned. What for? To say aye or no to it. Well, that disposes of the whole argument of my noble Friend, and it disposes of the argument insisted upon by the Attorney General. The Statute says if Parliament is not sitting your Proclamation shall expire unless Parliament is called together to pronounce judgment upon it. This is the true position. I need say no more therefore upon that play upon the word "concurrent," upon which the Attorney General spoke at such considerable length. It is quite sufficient for me to say that the Statute makes Parliament a necessary party to the Act of the Government. If it were not so, what a false pretence would have been all your allegations that the supervision of Parliament is a safeguard. What safeguard is it, unless you introduce Parliament in a different way from an ordinary Executive Act? I mentioned the speech of the Attorney General. I may dispose, in a single sentence, of another very long and emphatic part of it—his allusions and quotations from the speeches of my right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan). Well, those quotations seem to me uncommonly irrelevant, and I will ask the Attorney General why—because, except the first, not one of them had the smallest reference to the National League.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: Every one of them.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, I differ from the Attorney General, and I may say not one of them. Those speeches that were made at Hawick last year were speeches—I say it, speaking in the presence of my right hon. Friend—directed to a totally different thing—that is, to those objections which he entertained to the proposals in the plan of Home Rule to transfer the administration of justice to an Irish Parliament. That is an absolutely and totally different thing, and the whole of that which the Attorney General—with his professional skill, for which he is so well known—tried to establish entirely fails. Then the Attorney General was bringing forward these charges as proofs against my right hon. Friend. I said to an hon. Member sitting near me—"The man has got no evidence, and that is why he produces all those quotations, which apply to a totally and entirely different set of considerations." I want to join issue with my noble Friend, and I differ from him altogether that we are responsible in this matter, and have given a verdict upon it. I want to ask the House what are the charges brought by the Government against the National League for which they have proclaimed it? Now, before I come to what the charge is, it is very important to observe what the charges are not. There are several counts in the indictment of the 6th clause upon which the Government have entered a verdict of "Not Guilty" against the League. Let it be known to the House, and let it be known to the country, that you have not dared to say, you have not dared to allege, you have not dared to proclaim the League as an association formed for the commission of crime; you have not dared to affirm that it carries on operations for or by the commission of crime. You have not dared to affirm that it encourages or aids persons in the commission of crime; and if, after that, you ever, here or "elsewhere," dare to bring forward allegations of that kind, you will be confronted by the statement that the reponsible Government of the Queen, when proclaiming the League, did not dare to make such a charge. Those are the charges upon which a verdict of "Not Guilty" is entered on behalf of the League in the presence of the country. Well, then, what is the count upon which you demand, at the hands of this House, a conviction against the League? It is that it promotes or incites to acts of violence and intimidation, and an interference with the ordinary course of the law.

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON: That is all.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Then you have also acquitted the League of any charge of disturbing the maintenance of law and order. If you could have charged them, and if you could have proved it, you are doubly responsible; but under the circumstances you have not dared to do it. That being the charge, I will ask leave of the House to examine first the character of the charge, and then the nature of the evidence by which it is supported. Let me say, in the first place, that in order to understand the charge, that the real charge is intimidation, because, whatever may have been put in the Proclamation, there has been little or no attempt to prove that at present, at least, any acts of violence are done. The proof on that point is really insignificant. Of course, the gist of your charge is that the League is an instrument of and incites to intimidation. Now, in order to understand the character of the charge, let me first ask what the League may lawfully do. It may enter into a combination to prevent the exaction of unfair and exorbitant rents; so long as that is a voluntary combination, so long as no threats of intimidation are employed to compel people to enter into it, every tenant in Ireland is entitled to enter into a combination for the purpose of resisting unfair and exorbitant rent. I state that in the presence of lawyers on the Bench opposite, and I defy them to contradict it. It is said sometimes by people ignorant of the law that it is an offence to combine to break a contract. I say it is no offence —I say that a man who does it is subject only to the civil consequences of his conduct, and that no criminal consequences can or ought to arise from it. Then you may have a combination for that purpose, even although it involves the breaking of a contract; and you may refuse to enter into any contract, or to have any dealing in respect of land or anything else; you may have a combination that shall include every tenant in Ireland, the object of which shall be to refuse to occupy any land whatever, except upon terms which they deem to be fair. That is also a proposition which cannot be contradicted. They may enter into a combination in order that there shall be no occupation of any evicted farm where the man has been evicted, in their opinion, under unfair circumstances. Well, if a combination of that kind is sufficiently extensive, it must prevail. It was said the other night by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) that combinations are unlawful if they constrain a man to do what he does not wish, or to abstain from doing what he does wish to do. Now, I gave the Attorney General an instance where that proposition cannot be maintained. What is a strike? It is a combination to compel an employer to do what he does not like at all—that is, to pay higher wages. [*A laugh.*] I see the hon. and learned Attorney General laughs; but it was the doctrine of the Judges that it ought to be put down, because it did so compel a man, and they formed their judgment upon that very ground. Therefore, it is not true to say that to enter into a combination to make a man do, under these circumstances, that which he does not like—to lower rent, for instance, or to let land under fair conditions—is not a perfectly legitimate combination for such purposes. So far, then, as the League is an agrarian combination, and so long as it will pursue those objects, it is not only a legitimate organization, but it is, in my opinion, an organization which deserves and commands the sympathy of the English people. You have had it proved that the rents in Ireland are unjust and unfair. [*Cries of* "No!"] You have refused by law to give an adequate redress for that wrong and injustice. If you doubt that, ask the hon. Member for South Tyrone. What with the Amendments of my noble Friend, which he withdrew and voted against, what with the Amendments which the Government introduced in the House of Lords in order to destroy the favours they pretended to have given, the Land Bill has become, I believe, absolutely worthless. I do not go quite so far as the hon. Member for South Tyrone and say that it is mischievous, and would increase rather than lower rents. But in the state of circumstances there is no hope, no redress for the Irish tenants, except in that legitimate combination by which they will obtain for themselves that which the law has refused to give them. Well, Sir, I hope that that combination will be lawfully conducted. I hope it will be extensive; I wish it might be universal, because then there would be no doubt whatever as to its peaceful success; and all I can say is this—after the sentiments that we have heard I should think the proper person to be president of the Tenants' Union in Ireland would be the hon. Member for South Tyrone. But then you say that if these objects are legitimate, as unquestionably they are, they have been pursued by the League by unlawful methods; and that, I take it, is the point principally at issue tonight. It has been said that the League has extensively used intimidation. If so, I am not here to defend, extenuate, or apologize for it in any way. I stated on the second reading of the Crimes Bill —and I would call my noble Friend's attention to it—that if the Bill had been a Bill with Intimidation Clauses, I would have supported it. That is no new declaration. That was the course which we took when our Government came to an end in 1885. My right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian has, on previous occasions, stated that we had proposed to have clauses with reference to special juries, and a clause against intimidation. ["No!"] Who says "No?" The Gentleman who says "No" cannot know. Even my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham reluctantly assented to that proposal. We were turned out of Office; Lord Salisbury came into Office; and then the Attorney General, turning with ferocity upon my right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division, says—"You ought to have proclaimed the League." Well, you turned my right hon. Friend out of Office; you came into Office yourselves. Did you proclaim the League? It is a little too much that you should put up the Attorney General to make a charge against my right hon. Friend for knowing all these abominable things and not having proclaimed the League. You yourselves, knowing it all and holding personal communications with the leaders of the League, Lord Carnarvon, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was closeted with the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell). You determined not to proclaim the League. Why did you determine not to proclaim it? Was there no Boycotting then? Everyone knows that Boycotting in Ireland was as bad, if not worse, in 1885 than it is now. Lord Spencer's opinion is that Boycotting was worse in 1885, and you come deliberately to the opinion that you would not proclaim the League. You would not even have a clause against intimidation. You say that was not necessary at all; and, having tried the experiment for several months, all the Members of your Cabinet went up and down the country at the General Election saying that the experiment had been splendidly successful, and that it was quite right not to proclaim the League and not to have a clause against intimidation. That disposes of all the rhetoric of the Attorney General. *Tu quoque* is the most barren and irrational of arguments. We never hear any other agument used. It is the great staple of your rhetoric. The whole speech of the Attorney General, what was it but a *tu quoque* to my right hon. Friend and the Government of 1885? If we care to use *tu quoque* arguments, when you ask us, "Why did we not do it in 1882?" we might ask you with equal pertinence, "Why did you not do it in 1885?" But I pass that by. You have got an Intimidation Clause in this Bill. Why have you not used it? You were advised by your Friends the Liberal Unionist Leaders that you had better use that clause and not proclaim the League. Why have you not done it? The reason why you have not taken that which the Liberal Unionist Leaders told you was the wise and prudent course is the test of your real object and intention in this proceeding. If you had decided to take that course it would have been necessary for you to have proved intimidation to exist. You would have had to satisfy somebody else besides Lord Londonderry. You would have had to satisfy two Resident Magistrates. Well, that is not much. But you would have done a much more important thing by the evidence which you would have produced; you would have satisfied the English nation. You would have been bound to bring forward some evidence that intimidation existed, and as you distrusted your resources, you determined to take a course which would not make it necessary for you to prove intimidation; and that is the reason why you disregarded the advice of your Friends. You wished to strike not only against the men guilty of intimidation—you know that handful of comparatively insignificant men—the men you wanted to strike at, and the men you can strike at under this clause, are not the intimidators, but the men who restrain intimidation. [*A laugh.*] The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary laughs, but he knows so little about Ireland. He did not even think it necessary to listen—he seldom does when Irish Business is going on—but having brought these charges against the National League he lounged out of the House during a great part of the answer given to them by the secretary of the League.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I heard almost the whole speech.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will not say he was here during the whole of the speech. I know that during the most important part of the speech, in which the hon. Member proved to demonstration that one of the most important allegations which the right hon. Gentleman made was entirely unfounded in fact or in truth, I looked for the right hon. Gentleman, and I could not find him.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What allegation?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I cannot give the name; I will come to it presently. I say that what you desire to strike at are not the intimidators; you want to strike at the League, because it is a combination which is inconvenient to you, which is adverse to your political opinions, and which is adverse to the pecuniary interests of the class to which you are allied. That is why you are not satisfied to use the Intimidation Clauses, that is why you want to strike at your political enemies and to lay them at the feet of the landlords of Ireland. But then a plea has been set up in mitigation in various quarters; but by the Government it is said—"We do not mean to proclaim the whole League, but only parts of it which misconduct themselves." I have not heard the Government say that; but if it is their intention, can there be anything more monstrous than to declare, in the name of the Queen, that an entire association is dangerous, and yet to leave the greater part of that dangerous association to do its work, and only interfere with a part of it? It is a proposition so absurd that it is hardly worth referring to. You have taken a course which dispenses you from giving evidence of intimidation, which enables you to act, not only against the men who are guilty of intimidation, if there be such, but against everyone who is connected with the League—not merely against people who are members, but people who in any way attend the meetings of the League can be sent to prison, and even against the newspaper which publishes a notice connected with the League. Ah! Sir, it is the newspapers, too, that the Government want to get at. It is a little characteristic of this policy that the first man you have struck at is an Irish Member, and the editor of an Irish newspaper. That is the character of the policy of the Government, and an illustration of the manner in which they intend to pursue it. Now, then, what do you mean by intimidation? Let us come to closer quarters with that word than has been attempted, very prudently, by the Attorney General, or in that admirable and interesting speech of the Solicitor General for Scotland, whom we all welcome as an ornament to this House. It is not to intimidate to employ any means whatever to induce people to join a combination, unless it is accompanied by violence or threats of violence. That would not be disputed. Therefore, to use all sorts of means—it may be by persuasion or by other means—I see the Lord Advocate is waiting for the definition—by all other means which do not involve violence or threats of violence, is not intimidation. ["No, no!"] Then I should be glad to hear the Lord Advocate's own definition. You may, if you like, publish the names of the people who join you, and you may, if you like—though I am glad to hear the League has prohibited it—publish the names of the people who do not join it. I think that disposes of that newspaper rubbish which has been so much insisted upon by the Attorney General. [*A laugh.*] Yes; but you were not present to hear the answer given by the secretary of the League to the charge. The hon. Member challenges the Chief Secretary to show a single case where the threat to publish the names had been carried out, and he stated—and you cannot dispute that statement—that wherever those notices that the branches intended to do it were published, the League stopped its being done. Answer that, if you can? But it really was an extra precaution on the part of the League, for I know nothing whatever that should prevent any association from publishing the names of its members, and from declaring, if it pleases, the names of the people who do not join it. It is not intimidation to shun people; it is not intimidation to refuse to deal with people; it is not intimidation not to have communication with people. Those are means which may not commend themselves to our good taste; but they are not illegal. But the hon. Member for South Tyrone referred to a sentence in which the hon. Member for

Cork (Mr. Parnell) spoke of moral leprosy. He said that the League endeavoured to attach to people a moral leprosy. I suppose by that moral taint it is wished to be inferred that they ought to be shunned. You think that a wrong thing to attach this taint of moral leprosy. Why, who has been labouring week after week, and month after month, to attach this taint of moral leprosy to the Representatives of almost the whole of Ireland? It has been *The Times* newspaper, the great denouncer of Boycotting. It has held up a whole class of Members in this House—the Representatives of the Irish nation—as men so execrable in their character that every man out to shun them, and that it would be a disgrace for anyone, publicly or privately, to associate with them in any way. And who has been the aiders and abetters in that work? The persons on that Bench. The ringleader in that transaction has been the Leader of this House. And then you talk of moral leprosy; why a greater collection of right hon. Boycotters was never presented before. The Solicitor General for Scotland, in a pleasant and humorous way, spoke of the Sunday service of the League and of its commination. But those Boycotters on that Bench do not confine themselves to the Sabbath. They are at it every day of the week. It is their matins and their evensong. It is their creed and their decalogue; and they wish to hunt out of political life—out of all associations in politics—the people who represents nine-tenths of the Irish nation. The only difference between their attempt at Boycotting and the attempt which you charge upon the League is, that the League, according to you, has succeeded, and you, as everybody knows, have shamefully failed. But if the League has succeeded, it is, I suppose, because they have the sanction of the public opinion of their own country, and you have no sanction. The people of this country have been revolted and disgusted by your attempt to Boycott the Irish Members. Oh, yes; among the English constituencies the Irish Members have well avenged themselves. Having said this much upon the nature of intimidation, I shall say something about the evidence you have endeavoured to produce. Well, Sir, I should have thought that the Attorney General would have known that the meanest of criminals is entitled to see the depositions before he is convicted. I am quite sure that, acting in his professional capacity, he would have been ashamed to have taken the course which he has taken to-night against the National League. I think the country will appreciate the unfairness of your conduct and its object. The only specific evils, as far as I remember them, that have been alleged by you—even in the short time that there has been to examine into this matter—have been specifically disproved. I do not blame the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Ireland. I am sure he is quite incapable of producing that which he did not believe to be true; but, as I have said before, he is really so innocent of Ireland that anybody can impose upon him. He has been placed in the ridiculous position of bringing a grave indictment against the National League, and the whole or the greater part of his charge has turned out to be of the nature of a cock and bull story. I never heard, after 24 hours' notice, a case for the prosecution so blown out of the water as this was by the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington). I listened not only with pleasure, but instruction, to the speech of the Solicitor General for Scotland. I have no practical acquaintance with the Criminal Law of Scotland, and I was glad to receive from him a lesson in it. I have come to the conclusion that the main instruments for the conviction of a man in Scotland are, first of all, notoriety. That was the principal element of the evidence adduced by the Solicitor General for Scotland. On being called upon—I believe the proper word is "condescend"—he stood at the Table and read out the evidence, upon which he claimed a public conviction by the High Court of Parliament, from a Party pamphlet produced in the mint of the prosecution. I recognized its outside. I do not think he was in the House at the time the right hon. Gentleman opposite once fell into the same error of reading from a publication. I think it is called the Loyal and Patriotic Union, or something of that kind, conducted, I believe, by the Under Secretary for Ireland.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. J. P. B. ROBERTSON) (Bute): If the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say it, I would mention that I gave, as I stated at the time, the source from which I made each quotation—namely, newspapers in Ireland, and I mentioned the date of the publication and also the date of the meeting, and also the name of the branch of the League to which the publication referred.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: He mentioned it late on Thursday evening. He has not denied the Loyal and Patriotic Union Pamphlet. He has not denied the Under Secretary for Ireland or Colonel O'Callaghan. But then he says —"Oh, I mentioned the newspapers," and he says I am bound to know all in these newspapers. He reads them, and then he affects me with notice of the contents of *The Skibbereen Eagle*. He says that if I do not constantly read *The Skibbereen Eagle* and make myself aware of its contents I have not performed my duty; and that I ought to have known it. And then, with a want of caution which I should not have expected from the learned Gentleman, he takes it upon himself to state that all these newspapers are subsidized by the League, and he has been contradicted as to every one of them by the secretary to the League. A more unfortunate case, skilfully conducted, no doubt, as every case is conducted by the Attorney General, a more miserable and rotten case, I do not think I ever heard submitted to Parliament. Well, now, about this newspaper evidence. I do not read a great many newspapers, but when I do I see a great many things in them which I think very foolish, and some things which I think very mischievous; but that is not peculiar to *The Skibbereen Eagle*. Talking on the subject of intimidation and inciting to violence and crime, I read a passage the day before yesterday in a newspaper published in London. It referred to a very serious matter indeed, the unfortunate struggle that has just occurred between the British and Belgian fishermen at Ostend, and the article concludes thus—

> "Fishermen, to whatever country they belong, are roughened by their perpetual strife against the elements, and they are not a class to bear a long series of wrongs with undisturbed philosophy. If higher powers do not intervene the risk will become considerable that the men may sooner or later take the settlement of the dispute into their own hands.'

[Admiral FIELD: Hear, hear!] The gallant Admiral ought to hoist *The Skibbereen Eagle*, which might lead to hostilities on the fishing grounds. Now mark this sentence—

> "If this were to occur it is more than likely that the Belgians would be taught a severe though a useful lesson."

That is the doctrine, not of *The Skibbereen Eagle*, but of *The Times* newspaper. In a contest not between the Belgian and English fishermen, but between the Irish landlords and their tenants, if such language as that were used, why the editor of *The Times* would be to-night on a plank bed, and he might receive what might be called in his own words, "a severe though a useful lesson." I think that is quite enough to say about this thrashy penny-a-lining evidence, which is one of the main columns of the Government case. But then they have what they call their official evidence, and here a practice has been introduced, absolutely new to me, of Ministers of the Crown reading from documents which they refuse to produce upon the ground that such documents are confidential. Now, the practice with which I have been familar is that if documents are confidential and cannot be produced they cannot be read from. I will give one example, because I am familiar with it. It has been ruled over and over again that the opinions of the Law Officers of the Crown cannot be cited in this House, because they are confidential, and because they are confidential they cannot be quoted from. You have changed all that, and you cite official documents and you read just as much or just as little of them as you please. I will give you an illustration of the danger of a practice of that kind. Supposing the evidence of Sir Redvers Buller, instead of being published in the evidence of the Royal Commission, had been an official Report to the Government; supposing they had read extracts from it, and supposing by the merest accident they had left out the phrase about the League being regarded as the salvation of the Irish people—the House will see the danger there is in the practice which has been pursued with reference to these documents. I say with regard to such evidence as you have produced, you have acted most unfairly, not to the League only, but to the House of Commons, in reserving your evidence, in producing it in a manner, and at a time when it was impossible to test either its authenticity or its weight; but as far as it can be tested it appears to be worthless. It has broken down in its most important particulars, and yet such evidence as this, evidence which would not be taken to condemn the meanest offender, you employ, and I say it is scandalous to employ it, to blast the reputation and suspend the liberties practically of a whole people. You think you are going to get rid of this by saying—"Oh, you suspended the Habeas Corpus Act in 1881." Well, it is true we suspended the Habeas Corpus Act in 1881—my right hon. Friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow has referred to that circumstance—but what was the result of that suspension, and what was the experience of it? It was a most disastrous and calamitous failure, and I believe that Mr. Forster himself recognized that that was the fact. The reason why it was abandoned—why there was a Motion against it from your own Benches, by Sir John Dalrymple Hay—was that it was condemned by universal consent, and it is that very example which you know disastrously failed, which you know increased crime in Ireland, which you have taken as the model of your present legislation. Because what my right hon. Friend has said is perfectly true—that this practically amounts to a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. The office of the magistrate in this matter is simply to ascertain whether the man belonged to the League or not, and then it is his duty to send the man to prison. Why was that Act abandoned in 1882? Because English opinion would not tolerate men being shut up without trial. Will they tolerate your proceeding now? Do not ask it of me. Why, your supporter the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) has said that the doubt he expressed was whether the English people would support this policy of yours. And as you had to abandon the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1882, so you will have to abandon the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, or what is equivalent to it now. The whole difference between the Crimes Act of 1882 and the Act of 1881 was this, that under the Act of 1882 there was judicial inquiry into the alleged intimidation, and the people of this country were prepared to support sentences which were founded upon judicial inquiry, and they would not support imprisonment which was founded only on the discretion of the Executive. You are entering upon this task. The boastful and braggadocio tone in which the Attorney General concluded his speech is not a good omen; it did not display the spirit which assures victory. You have got your Bill and you will have your Proclamation, and then you will have to act upon it. You have been invited—that is rather too weak a word—you have been hounded on by the noble Lord the Member for the Tavistock Division (Viscount Ebrington) to do your worst, and, if possible, worse still. I am sorry that that speech did not come from the other side of the House. I could wish that language of that kind, as addressed to the people of Ireland, should rather come from the other side of the House, to which sentiments of that kind more properly belong. The noble Lord need not distress himself; I do not think that he need fear that the Chief Secretary for Ireland will be half-hearted. I think everything we have heard and seen of him tends to the belief that he will strike and spare not. That shows the spirit by which the Tory Party is animated. The landlord party think they have got their heel upon the tenants of Ireland, and they insist upon the Government using it. If he should happen for a moment to slumber there is always the Under Secretary for Ireland to keep him up to the mark. Therefore, I do not think the noble Lord the Member for Tavistock need fear at all. The Irish Government have got their mandate; they are the agents under that mandate for the Orange landlords of Ireland; and you may see in the exultant countenance of the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) that at last his game is going to be played. But I do not believe you have measured the nature or the extent of the task you have undertaken. In my opinion, in spite of the Attorney General, the National League represents the people of Ireland socially to the same extent that the Nationalist Members represent the people of Ireland—that is to say, the National League represents the social wishes and wants of the great majority of the people of Ireland. You are going, if you can, to strangle the League. I doubt whether you will succeed. But whether you succeed or not, do you think you will destroy the society, its sympathies, or its wants from which that League has arisen? The hon. Member for South Tyrone, who is also going to divide with you to-night, has described your policy. He has called it "A switchback railway, which is driving Heaven knows where." The hon. Member is always graphic in his descriptions, and from his description this Proclamation may be known as the "Switchback Railway," a railway going Heaven knows where—with the noble Lord the Member for Tavistock as stoker, and the hon. Member for Tyrone sitting on the safety-valve. No wonder, in these circumstances, that the hon. Member for Tyrone sees nothing but clouds and darkness before him. He said the Chief Secretary might want these powers, and more. Oh, yes; before long he will want more. It is the nature of this policy, as it is that of strong drink, that the more you take the more you want. You are only at the beginning of this work. This is the inauguration of the 20 years of resolute Government; yet I doubt whether you will see 20 months of this resolute Government with your irresolute allies. You are entering upon this struggle with the great majority of the Irish nation against you; that has been known before. But you are entering upon this struggle under conditions which have not been known before; you are entering upon it with the determined opposition of a great English Party, largely supported by the English nation. This is a condition under which no Coercion Bill has ever been worked, and under which every Coercion Bill must necessarily fail. In Ireland you have the Castle, I think the worst system of administration that exists in any country in Europe; and I think, under the present Administration, it is the worst form it has ever assumed. It will be our business in this struggle, whether it be protracted or short and decisive, to focus upon your action the attention of the English people. We will let them see and understand everything you do, and everything you attempt to do in the administration of this Proclamation. We will treat it as you have seen under a microscope sometimes some foul drop of water magnified. [*Cheers from the Ministerial Benches.*] Yes; it is a very good thing to magnify and make visible these slimy creatures with which you have to deal, and to deter men from swallowing unawares the contaminated draught. And that, Sir, will be our task. We hope to teach the English and the Irish people to partake of purer fountains. We shall offer them the waters of conciliation instead of your sewage of coercion. This will be a memorable Division in its results. I agree with my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham. Your policy is full of the gravest difficulties and dangers. It will be, in my opinion, the death-blow—the final death-blow of a policy of coercion; and out of the ashes of that coercion we shall see a brighter and a better birth when the public opinion of a free country will sweep away your Administration and your policy too.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Mr. Speaker, the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down opportunely reminds us that he once held a great position at the Bar. He has filled two high positions in the course of his remarkable career. He has held the Office of Home Secretary to the Queen in Her Majesty's Government. He has not only held that Office, but he has also held a distinguished position at the Bar. He had to choose this evening of which part he would be reminded —whether he would, in the position of an ex-Home Secretary remember the great responsibility which rests on the man who once held that Office, or whether he would hold a brief for the National League. We have seen the choice which he has made at a moment which he himself describes as momentous in the history of the country. He has told us of the gravity of our task. We are not unaware, we are not unconcious of the great responsibility that is placed upon us, and we know how the responsibility is increased, and how the difficulties of our task are increased by the fact that those who themselves have held high office in the State, notwithstanding the manner in which they, in similar circumstances, were supported by the Opposition, intend to conduct themselves in the present crisis, as announced by the right hon. Gentleman this evening. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that our actions are to be submitted to a magnifying glass.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: A microscope.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Well, that is a magnifying glass. Our every action is to be magnified.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: No.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes; and our actions are to be submitted to a magnifying glass in the hands of this superb champion of exaggeration. I have no doubt that he will succeed in his exaggeration, and I call the attention of the public to the fact that he has already announced that he intends to magnify the action of the Executive Government. The right hon. Gentleman has taken the same course as that taken by my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian in pretending to complain that there was no information before the House to justify the Proclamation which has been issued, and I think it was my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian who said that the House was asked to vote for the Proclamation completely blindfold. But if they are blindfold it is because they have placed a bandage over their own eyes. To anyone who can read, the history of the National League has been clear enough, and there have been sufficient sources of information to enlighten my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian and his Friends. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby speaks of our having rested our case upon the evidence of penny-a-liners. Why, these penny-a-liners are the writers in the National Press which is so largely represented in this House. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby is speaking of members of a most respected profession who are enlightening their own countrymen, and, I hope, the English public, with regard to the doings of the National League. Penny-a-liners! One would have thought the right hon. Gentleman was speaking of leading articles and vivid descriptions. But what is placed before the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends? They call them advertisements; but of what are they advertisements? They are the official statements of the doings of the branches of League. Do you reject that evidence? Do right hon. Gentlemen opposite think that these advertisements, as they call them, but which are not put in as advertisements——

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON: They are not advertisements.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Certainly not; but they were so called by the right hon. Gentleman.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: That was the statement of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The Chief Secretary never allowed us to see them.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Never allowed him to see what? Irish newspapers? The right hon. Gentleman told us the other evening, in a most naïve remark, that he was extremely ignorant when he passed the legislation of 1881. I thought he had learnt wisdom since then—that he had applied himself to the study of the Irish Question. It is all very fine for the right hon. Gentleman to mock at *The Skibbereen Eagle* and the enthusiastic cheers of hon. Members below the Gangway, but he says now that he has had no access to the Irish National Press that has published the doings of the League. Does he wish to remain ignorant? There is no other place to study the doings of the League like that Press which is conducted under the auspices and talents of hon. Members below the Gangway. They write in a portion of these newspapers, and I think that the right hon. Gentleman was ill-advised when he discarded that Press as if it was unworthy of his sublime notice. They are the chronicles of the doings of the National League and the authorized exponents of its policy. These newspapers contain evidence that ought to be circulated in every constituency in England, and then the constituencies will be able to judge better of the doings of the National League on behalf of which the ex-Home Secretary holds a brief to-night. Now, I wonder to what extent the ignorance of right hon. Gentlemen opposite is pushed with regard to what is written and said in Ireland? I would wish to establish this proposition, and I call the particular attention of the House to the point. I think it was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby himself who said that the National League is an apostolic successor of the Land League. Remember the connection; it is extremely important, because if that is so, I think the language addressed by right hon. Gentlemen opposite to the

Land League will now, according to their own contention, be applicable to the National League. The Secretary of the National League spoke to-night of the calumnies used against the League, but the worst things that have been said in the course of this debate with regard to the National League have been quotations from right hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to that League of which the present is the apostolic successor. So that if hard things have been said with regard to the League—and they have been said, and in the judgment of many ought to be said—these calumnies, if they are calumnies, do not lie at the door of the present Administration, nor at the door of hon. Members on this side of the House, but they express the full conviction of right hon. Gentlemen opposite when they were sitting on these Benches—the full conviction which they held a very few years ago, and some of them a very few months ago. Now, is there any person in this House who will deny the connection between the Land League and the National League? You will see that I insist upon this point in regard to the character of both Leagues. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby probably does not read *The Kerry Sentinel.*

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Will you give me a copy?

MR. GOSCHEN: I do not know whether it is written by penny-a-liners; but I believe it is the property of an hon. Member of this House. Here is a passage, to which I will call special attention—

> "The usual meeting of the Tralee branch of the National League was held on Sunday, the 17th of July, Mr. T. Harrington, M.P., presiding. On taking the chair Mr. Harrington, who was greeted with cheers, tendered his best thanks to those present for the favour conferred upon him. He took the chair with very great pleasure, because it was not often that he had an opportunity of attending a meeting in Kerry and of taking part in the struggle with the men who took part with him in the struggle in the Land League agitation in its earliest stages."

[MR. T. C. HARRINGTON: Hear, hear!] I am glad that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite acknowledge that they are glad to meet their old associates of the Land League. Their cheers are natural; and I shall ask presently my right hon. Friend whether his cheers are quite justifiable under the circumstances? Mr. Harrington, continuing, said—

> "He was very glad to have this opportunity of again seeing old faces, he might say, round that table carrying on the same struggle"—

you accept that—

> "which they initiated there some five or six years ago in conjunction with the Land League organization."

Well, the hon. Member was glad to see old faces. Some faces were probably missing at that gathering. Sheridan was not there.

MR. T. C. HARRINGTON: I am perfectly sure the right hon. Gentleman must know that he is making a misstatement. Sheridan had nothing to do with Kerry, and did not belong to Kerry. As a matter of fact, I never met Sheridan in the whole course of my life, and I never exchanged a word with him. If I had come across him, I might have exchanged a word with him in the same way as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary for Ireland has done.

MR. GOSCHEN: The hon. Gentleman was glad to see old faces of the Land League, and it is rather hard upon Sheridan that he should not be included. What does that interruption mean? We wish to know whether, if the old faces, the Sheridans, the Egans, the Brennans, had been present—[*Cries of* "And the King-Harmans!"] I call the attention of the House to that interruption. That is the only answer they can give to the point I am making against them. They have not now among them those notorious gentlemen who have transferred themselves to other climates under the terrorism of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian at the time when that germ of Home Rule of which he has given us the history had not yet developed into a large tree. Now, I wish to connect the Land League with the National League; and the House will see that it is accepted not only with acquiescence, but with enthusiasm, by hon. Members below the Gangway. If there was any doubt upon the point, there is the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), who, in his speech at the Rotunda the other evening, said they would pursue the same intimidation—the same class of intimidation—as had been pursued by the Land League in old days.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I never said anything of the sort; and I will not allow any right hon. Member to put in my mouth language I did not use. What I said was this—

> "If what I call organized public opinion be described as intimidation, we shall pursue that class of intimidation to the end."

Mr. GOSCHEN: According to *The Freeman's Journal*, these were the words of the hon. Gentleman—

> "I want to say boldly that so far as I go I intend to practice the same form of intimidation in spite of any Proclamations or prosecutions which may take place."

Mr. DILLON: Will the right hon. Gentleman read the context? What went before?

Mr. GOSCHEN: Certainly. The hon. Member said—

> "If the operations of the League in the past can be correctly described as being intimidation, then I say I intend to practice them and to preach them."

What I want to know is, if hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway will accept the description of their counsels of to-day of that form of intimidation which they intend to practice? A remarkable silence has come over the Benches below the Gangway opposite. Will they accept the words that have fallen from the right hon. Gentleman who to-night has held a brief on their behalf? We have the admission from him that the one League is the apostolic successor of the other. The right hon. Gentleman used extremely strong words. He said that they had heard the doctrine of the Land League expounded by the man with full authority to expound it, and that that doctrince, as expounded, was the doctrine of "treason and assassination." Does the right hon. Gentleman retract his words? They are words of the counsel for the League to-night. "That doctrine," he added, "will to-morrow be in the hearing of the civilized world, which will pronounce its judgment upon what I may term this vile conspiracy." When did the right hon. Gentleman change his views as to this "vile conspiracy?" The Land League which he denounced as a vile conspiracy has been succeeded by the National League, the members of which now admit their responsibility for the doings of the Land League; and though the right hon. Gentleman denounced the Land League as a "vile conspiracy," he yet holds a brief for the National League to-night. We also say that the National League is a conspiracy, and a conspiracy which we must endeavour, by all the forces of the Government, to reduce to its proper level. I see my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian in his place, and we have heard from him that the judgment of the civilized world is on his side. But a few years ago the civilized world, it appears, was on the other side. It was on the side of those who pronounced the Land League as a vile conspiracy. I can understand that the bulk of the Liberal Party, under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman, have a right-about-face movement, but that the civilized world as well has completely changed its views is too much to ask us to believe. I think I heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby make some observation — I did not quite catch it.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I only said that the civilized world was always on our side.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am at any rate glad of the admission that the civilized world was at one time on the side of those who declared that the Land League was a vile conspiracy. [*Interruption.*] Shame, then, to those who called it a vile conspiracy.

An hon. Member: No one called out "Shame!"

Mr. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby has to-night spoken of us as right hon. Boycotters. But who called the hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway "conspirators," a term which was never used by us? Hon. Members below the Gangway cheer the right hon. Gentleman when he says that we try to Boycott them, but we were only following the example of their counsel this evening, who, some years ago, used words in regard to them in this House which we have not forgotten, though it appears that they have been indulgently and kindly forgotten by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. The right hon. Gentleman has said a great deal in the course of his speech with a view to represent that the struggle which we are waging is simply a struggle on the part of the landlords. He holds a brief to-night for the National League. Did he ever hold a brief for the landlords? He was Home Secretary when the Proclamation was issued putting down the Land League, and that Proclamation set forth, among the grounds for proclaiming the League, that it was an association which affected to control the relations of landlord and tenant in Ireland. Was he thinking of the landlords at the time that he was a Member of the Government that issued that Proclamation? Was that Proclamation issued in the interests of the tenants or of the landlords? How, then, does it lie in the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman to charge us with legislating only in the interests of the landlords? And then it proceeds—

> "And whereas the business of the said association has been sought to be effected by an organized system of intimidation."

To-night my right hon. Friend asked the Solicitor General for Scotland to interpret what intimidation means, but he knew well enough when the word was used in this Proclamation. "An organized system of intimidation." Do you acknowledge it to-night? Do you approve of it now, and if you approve it, why did you proclaim the Land League at that time? The Proclamation proceeds—

> "And whereas the said association has now avowed its purpose to be to prevent the payment of rent and to subvert the law as administered in the Queen's name in Ireland, we hereby warn all persons that the said association styling itself the Irish National Land League, or by whatsoever name it may be called, is an unlawful and criminal association, and that all meetings to carry out such designs are alike unlawful and criminal, and will be prevented and if necessary dispersed by force."

The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow said to-night that our action was political. Not a bit of it. It is precisely on the same grounds as those upon which we are now acting that the Land League was proclaimed by the right hon. Gentleman in the days when he was prepared to be "a right hon. Boycotter" of hon. Members below the Gangway. At the same time another Proclamation was issued which showed that through all parts of Ireland an organized system of intimidation was being practised. It set out that—

> "Whereas various persons, subjects of Her Majesty, are coerced to give up their lawful employments, to abandon their lawful occupations, to abstain from the payment of rents lawfully due, or from the fulfilment of their lawful engagements, to do what they have a lawful right to abstain from doing, or to abstain from doing what they have a lawful right to do, now we hereby warn all persons that all such practices are unlawful and illegal, and that any person engaging in such practices is liable to be arrested and imprisoned."

What difference, I should like to know, is there between this description of the Land League of those days and the National League at the present moment? People are now coerced to give up their lawful employments, to abandon their lawful occupations, to abstain from the payment of their lawful rents, and to become members of and subscribers to unlawful associations, just as they were then. What we contend is that in every one of these instances the present League is acting precisely on the same lines as the Land League acted upon in the time of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt). I do not wish to push this argument in what the right hon. Gentleman calls a "*tu quoque* direction." I do not wish to hold him responsible in the slightest degree for his acts in those days; but it is necessary to remind the public of these facts, in order to show that we are dealing now with an association which is the direct successor of that Land League, and which is practising, and almost boasting of, precisely similar practices and a precisely similar organization. Mr. Speaker, if the House will accord me its kindly indulgence a little further, I should like to say a few words in order to meet one or two of the facts which have been raised in the course of this debate. What I would wish to show is this, that the system of organization with which we now have to deal was acknowledged in the earliest days of the League as probably superseding the necessity for outrage. Hon. Gentlemen opposite will not, I am sure, contradict that statement. In those days, when outrages occurred—terrible outrages—they said that they would be unnecessary if only the tenants organized themselves properly. The tenants have organized themselves. They have got as complete an organization—more complete, as an hon. Member boasted—than has ever existed in Ireland, or, I believe, in any other country before. And so now that organization supersedes the necessity for these overt acts of crime and outrage, the absence of which is pointed to as a proof that no legislation is necessary. But no remarks that have been made in this House have broken down the case that there exists a universal system of Boycotting in Ireland —a system of Boycotting with which hon. Members opposite will scarcely deny that they have connected themselves. I shall certainly not, at this period of the evening, trouble the House with many quotations; but we are asked for the facts, and we would wish to overwhelm them with the facts.

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON: Why do you not?

Mr. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member the Secretary to the National League (Mr. T. C. Harrington) taunted my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) with the fact that though there are 1,800 branches of the National League, he had only quoted 25 resolutions. "Only quoted 25 resolutions!" As if they were the only 25 that could be quoted! My right hon. Friend, and I myself, and the Members of the Government, have had hundreds of these resolutions before us; but we knew to what extent we should weary the House if we were compelled to quote them all.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Blue Book.

Mr. GOSCHEN: We thought, and I will answer the hon. and learned Member at once, that hon. Members dealing with the Irish Question were more or less familiar with what we consider to be the notorious facts. We did not think it was so necessary as they seem to think it is that we should go into all these details; but I would point out to the House that while my right hon. Friend has mainly called the attention of the House to the grosser forms of outrage and intimidation, there exists in the evidence which the Nationalist Press affords but too abundant proof in the minutest details, showing to what extent Boycotting really interferes with the minutest details of daily life. And therefore everything that has been said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) about the similarity between the National League and English trades unions or English political associations is absolutely beside the purpose. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby undertook to renew this point, and to ask what would be the opinion of this country if a political association took a certain course. Well, has there been any political association in this country which has followed up, in England or in Ireland, the minutest action of every man by a system of espionage? Do hon. Members opposite deny the espionage? No; they cannot do so. They know that it extends even to a man's sports—that if he joins in athletic sports where there are obnoxious persons, a resolution will be passed by the branch that he be expelled for having associated in athletic sports with obnoxious persons. I quote a trivial case to show to what extent the League is prepared to go. Would you believe that they will actually count the amount of refreshment served out to men in a public-house? A resolution has been passed at a branch of the National League censuring a publican for having given certain men more than the actual legal allowance which he was bound to serve.

An hon. Member: Why should it not be passed?

Mr. GOSCHEN: Why should it not be passed? They follow a man up from morning to night in every detail of his life. Hon. Members opposite are the champions of liberty, and this is their notion of what liberty is. But how do they know these things? Why, they have such a system of spies and informers. See what a body of spies and informers must be at the disposal of hon. Gentlemen opposite for such trivial details to be brought to their knowledge as the amount which a man drinks in a public-house. Then they pass resolutions condemning a man because he has shaken hands with another man, because he has drank with another man, because he has been seen speaking to another man. I would challenge the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) to say is there anything in the history of this country, past or present, is there anything in the history of France even, or in the history of any other modern nation equivalent in the slightest degree to this fearful system of espionage carried on under the auspices of the League, and which they do not attempt to deny?

Mr. DILLON: I do deny it. There is not a word of truth in it. I utterly deny that a system of espionage is carried on.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Then, if there is none, I should like to know very much how it is that all this happens to be brought to the knowledge of the local branches?

Mr. DILLON: It appears in the full light of day.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Of course, these things are most insupportable; but they are only a part of the programme sketched out at the Rotunda the other day. They are part of the system of "making a man's life unhappy." The hon. Member is very indignant at my remark; but what did he mean by saying that "a man's life should be made unhappy?" We know well enough what it is. It is to make him——

Mr. DILLON: What did you mean when you denounced me?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I ask what did the hon. Member mean when——

Mr. DILLON: Do not ask me these questions if you do not want me to reply.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The hon. Member has said that we know perfectly well what he meant. Well, we think we do know what he meant. We think it is another development of the "moral leprosy" spoken of by his Chief. I can understand the indignation of the hon. Gentleman in this House; but when he speaks to an Irish audience and tells them that the lives of men are to be made unhappy, those are serious words, the responsibility for which must rest upon him. Now, if he thinks that I am speaking lightly, here is a resolution which has been passed, and which we have upon undoubted authority. It was to the effect that a man was observed to shake hands with another man; that a third person was observed to drink with another; and that a fourth was seen to be quite familiar with an objectionable person. [*Laughter from the Irish Members.*] Yes; you may laugh; but do you think your victims laugh?

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Others will.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Hon. Members must see that this is the apparatus at which we are attempting to strike, which deals with the minutest particulars, but which rises up and inflicts material ruin in many cases, and moral death upon many occasions. Here is another unanimous resolution with regard to certain tenants who refused to join in the Plan of Campaign, to the effect that they should not be allowed to enter the parish church. Has that branch been rebuked by the Secretary of the National League (Mr. T. C. Harrington), or is this only one of the forms of "making men's lives unhappy?"

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON: The right hon. Gentleman has asked me a question, as it is his habit to ask many questions, which always assume the argument to be in his own favour. I beg to assure him that I never saw any reference to this case, and that I believe the meeting to which he refers must be exceedingly recent. If I had seen it, not only should I have condemned the branch, but I should have dissolved it immediately, and dissolved it very warmly, too.

Mr. GOSCHEN: The Government may do that.

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON: What is the date of the meeting?

Mr. GOSCHEN: Two months ago.

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON: What is the date?

Mr. GOSCHEN: The 25th of June, and the resolution was published in *The Sligo Champion.* The hon. Member will see that he is a little late on this occasion in rebuking the branch. I can quite understand that in the multitude of the branches with which he has to deal many of these resolutions may have escaped his notice. But I venture to think that, looking at the stigma which must rest upon any association whose branches will pass resolutions of this kind, it would have been a prudent course if the hon. Gentleman had employed one of his subordinates to report to him the exuberant actions of some of the branches of the League.

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON: I think the House must credit me with some desire to meet this case, and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that one man is engaged in my office who has no other duty than that of supervising these things.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I gather from the hon. Member that a subordinate was engaged with scissors and paste upon *The Sligo Champion*, and that, under his instructions, this extract must be in the offices of the National League. If so, all I can say is that it is unfortunate that it was not submitted to the severe judgment of the hon. Member. We know now that, not in consequence of any action taken by this House, not in consequence of the passing of the Crimes Act, and not in consequence of the shadow of this Proclamation, but in consequence of the real indignation of those who wish to make men's lives unhappy if they disobey their commands, but who still do stick at something, a resolution of this kind would have been condemned by the hon. Member. Well, the hon. Member is the authorized Secretary of the National League, and he spoke this evening, and attempted to cast discredit upon the story of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) with regard to the case of Justin M'Carthy and his son, who had been Boycotted, and the impression of everybody who heard the hon. Member's speech would have been that the whole story was the invention of some fertile brain.

Mr. T. C. HARRINGTON: I mentioned the name of Mr. Hussey.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes; but it is possible that it may have come from Mr. Hussey, and may, nevertheless, be true in all its details. To use the splendid words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), who said the hon. Member had "entirely disposed of all the charges of the Chief Secretary for Ireland," he "disproved" this by saying that the story came from Mr. Hussey, which it did not, and in the eyes of the counsel for the defence that certainly appeared to be conclusive evidence. But I wish the House, which naturally looks for some authentic accounts from the hon. Member who represents the National League—I wish the House to know how he argued in this same case. He spoke of the number of persons who lived in the village, and, by a rough process of multiplication, he argued that there could not have been as many people concerned in the case as had been alleged, and that, therefore, the story was impossible. But the League does not only strike in one village. It is much more ubiquitous. It places its hand on the neighbouring villages, and so the whole story may be true without the least discredit being caused by the fact of the number of people in a particular village. But let me put forward another of these cases of accumulated Boycotting in the same style as that which was narrated by my right hon. Friend, but which comes from an authority which will not, I think, be disputed by hon. Members below the Gangway, as it is an extract from *The Leinster Leader*. I entreat the House to listen to this case, which is from *The Leinster Leader* of January 1, 1887—

> "Borris-in-Ossory.—There was a large attendance of the Committee in their rooms on Sunday. Members present—Messrs. James Murphy, President, A. Markey, Vice President, Andrew Lambe, Treasurer, Martin Delany, P.L.G., honorary secretary, John Butler, John Maher, Andrew Bergin, Daniel Cassidy, Patrick Butler, and Joseph Sweeney. It was unanimously agreed that all persons condemned by this branch should be republished in the local newspapers for the information of the public, to prevent them from holding any communication with the following evil-disposed persons, namely:—Thomas Tynan and family, for land-grabbing and care-taking Lyster's evicted farms; William Roe and Son, for lending Tynan and Sons farm implements and tolerating their herd. Patrick Fitzpatrick, to be one of Tynan's bails to hold and keep a pound for the purpose of impounding cattle, &c., off the evicted lands now in their care; Thomas Watson, for bailing Tynan for the same meritorious purpose; Patrick Bryan and family and John White and family for taking con-acre land from Boycotted Tynan in 1885, for which all of them have not yet been condoned; William Shortt, stonemason, has been lately condemned for publicly and defiantly violating the rules, and his name has been struck off the list of enrolled members; Martin Delany *alias* Rut, for enjoying himself at an Emergency spree, held under the auspices of the Boycotted Tynans, in their house on Christmas night; and Jeremiah Shelly, victualler and farmer, who has profited by the agitation by getting his rent reduced in the Land Court, for partaking of refreshments in the well-known Boycotted saloon at Ballybrophy, in the company of Peter Roe, who has been frequently condemned by this branch. The committee were disposed to take a lenient view of his case; but when he would give no satisfaction for this offence they had no other alternative but to erase his name off the registry."

I do not know whether that branch has been rebuked. We were told the other day—I think by a Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench—that the National League were now employed upon "registration." Some English people thought it was a registration for electoral purposes that they were engaged upon; but they are really at work in preparing a black list—in preparing registries such as the one I have read out. Note the refined cruelty of the business, if that is not too strong a phrase to use. See how they follow their victims up—how they know what they do. Even a Christmas Eve party was not free from the espionage of the League, and they Boycott a man for being present at a Christmas Eve party, or what they call an "Emergency spree." This is how men are held up to the obloquy and hatred of the public. Are not these very successful methods of "making men's lives unhappy?" These are small matters, but they are matters which bring home to a man the evil he will undergo if he dares break with the League. What did we hear from the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan)? Not one word did we hear from him, nor from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), in condemnation of these practices. You have seen that the names are published, but that is not the only thing. Here is an actual placard which was stuck upon the walls:—

"Report of the Vigilance Committee.

"List of people in Mitchelstown who were base enough to betray the people's cause despite all warnings:—

"Mrs. Jane Cahill supplied Emergency men Percival and comrades.

"Miss Eliza Kelly supplied Couche, Benson, &c.

"Roger O'Donnell supplied Coughlan on April 27.

"William Coughlan supplied John Coughlan on April 28.

"Mrs. Mary Noonan supplied bread, &c.

"Patrick Clifford, of Gurteenalariff, drinking with John Coughlan.

"Paky Conran, Fitzgibbon's friend.

"Patrick Molan, of Glenacurrane, an associate of Jim Neill and Davis.

"Mat Brien, painter, painted Couche's house.

"O'Callaghan's, dressmakers, had dealings with Couche.

"Redmond Condon, an old offender.

"The meat suppliers of the Castle are known, and will, if they persevere, appear in next report.

"Beware of those people.

"By order."

MR. T. M. HEALY: By order of whom?

MR. T. C. HARRINGTON: By whose order?

MR. GOSCHEN: I leave that to hon. Members opposite. I do not say it is done by the branch.

An hon. MEMBER: Then, why quote it?

MR. GOSCHEN: I will tell you. Because, if it were not done by the branch, it is the result of the action of the branch. Certainly, it bears a very suspicious appearance. They could not challenge a precisely similar case; but greater caution may be observed in some cases, and anonymous placards may be of more use.

An hon. MEMBER: They are printed at the Castle.

MR. GOSCHEN: Now, I will just point out one thing which is of great importance. Hon. Gentlemen have said that we have not been able to establish a connection between the action of the branches—between their threats and the actual occurrence of outrage. We have read many cases where abject apologies have been made—where, according to the testimony of the League themselves, there has been shown the terrorism exercised over the unfortunate victims. Men do not go and grovel before a branch of the National League, and have their names denounced and published in the papers with their apology, unless they are frightened of some evil happening to them. It would be surprising indeed if we were able to trace the exact connection between the League and the outrages. But when outrages are committed, not by single men, but by bands numbering from five to 15, it is evident that you have the result of some organization. I do not say they are organized by the branches of the League, but I do say they are organized by the branches of some society. Fifteen men do not go together and act in this way unless there is some power behind them, and it is that power that we must endeavour to find, wherever it is. If it is not in the branches, we must endeavour to find it elsewhere. These outrages are continually occurring. Numerous cases of outrage have been reported during the last two months in Kerry and Clare, and we have been unable to find out the perpetrators. In nearly every case reported by the police the ominous two words occur in the report, "No clue" after the statement of the outrage. I ask, is it likely that in any district where there is this large number of men committing these midnight outrages there would be no clue unless there is some organization behind them? Would it be possible for hon. Members below the Gangway to throw light upon these points? It would be to their interest to help us if the branches of the League were thoroughly clean. The branches know by their universal system what everybody does—who works with whom, who shakes hands warmly with whom, who plays with whom, who drinks with whom—but they do not know, or they will not tell us, who gathers together those bands of men in the midnight in order to commit outrage. They, who are so well informed on everything else, are not informed on this most vital point; not one particle of evidence is ever placed by them before the Executive with regard to this to clear themselves from the suspicion of guilt. Not one atom of evidence has ever been supplied by the branches of the League as to the perpetrators of these outrages.

An hon. MEMBER: Where is your Secret Service money?

MR. GOSCHEN: They scoff at the idea that a body of citizens, by a universal system, should help the Executive in obtaining evidence, not merely against those who commit outrages on landlords, but also against those who attack labourers in their dwellings, and tenants who have taken land from other tenants. In no case that I know of has the slightest assistance ever been rendered in order to show that they are free from complicity with those who go about in bands committing these midnight outrages. We are asked why we have not acted under those sections of the Act which would avoid the Proclamation of the League. Several explanations have been given of that; and, above all, this difficulty with regard to getting evidence which foils the action of the Executive Government. But I can suggest another difficulty, which is one of the gravest in the matter; it is that the punishment of the League seem to me to be heavier than the punishments inflicted by the law of the land. To make men's whole lives unhappy is the punishment of the National League, and side by side with that what are the few months' imprisonment which may be imposed by the law of the land? Hon. Members from England are saying that they are going over to Ireland in order to court the martyrdom of a short imprisonment; but I put it to them whether, instead of a few months' imprisonment, they were going there to have their lives rendered miserable in the way in which the National League makes its victims miserable—what would they think? If they were in the future to be shunned by every friend that they had—if their sons were to be shunned by all their companions, if they were to be excluded from their several clubs, if they were to be kept out of their parish church. [*Cheers from the Irish Members.*] Hon. Members do not, for a moment, impose on us by that cheer. Note how they cheered one out of the 12 incidents I referred to. They could not interrupt me in regard to any other circumstances than the keeping of persons out of their parish churches. I say that if those hon. Members had to look forward to all the terrors which this relentless system imposes on its victims—if this was to be the penalty of their going to Ireland, would they not shun it infinitely more than the short imprisonment which they seem to look forward to with such satisfaction? It is because the punishment of the League is worse than the punishment of the law of the land. The law of the land is helpless, and you must strike at the Courts instead of striking merely at the tools and the instruments which execute the decrees of the Courts; and it is for that reason that we must take power to deal, not with the solitary agent who carries out the behests of the Court—that cruel Court which sits in judgment on every action of a man's life—but you must strike at the organization itself which spreads this system over all the land. The Secretary of the National League spoke of "our government of Ireland." The phrase fell quite naturally from his lips; he acknowledged and apologized for any *laches* which the Government of the land, in the hands of the National League, might have committed. I point to that as showing the House the extent to which they think they are governing Ireland; but what I say is that you must strike at the Courts as well as at the instrument. Now, we have been taunted, I think, by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) for inventing new crimes; it is one of his favourite charges; and I say that the Land League has invented new crimes, and the National League has extended a register of crimes such as no country ever saw, and under this new Code friendliness is a crime, mercy is a crime, forgiveness is a crime, because every Christian virtue of helpfulness is a crime. Well, Sir, we have been told, and told with truth, that the responsibility of this matter must rest upon the Executive Government. For our part, we agree with those who hold that upon us must rest this heavy responsibility. We agree with those who hold that we do not share this responsibility with the House; we cannot place it upon the shoulders of the House. We shall never be able to point to the acquiescence of the House, and say—"It was your doing as well as ours." No; in taking this grave step we are deeply conscious that upon us must rest the responsibility. We trust our friends and our supporters will stand by us. We acknowledge that no portion of the duty of the Executive Government can be shared with the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) or the Liberal Unionists —it is upon us, and upon us alone, that the responsibility rests, and the House and every Member of the House and every opponent whom we have may be certain that we feel it from the very bottom of our hearts. We know what we have to encounter, and the spirit in which we are likely to be met. On one occasion when the Executive Government took a similar grave step—not graver than this, but as grave—these words were used by the head of the Government—

> "We are the Executive Government, and we are entitled and are bound to claim a hearty and cordial support in a great national crisis for the vindication of the law of the land."

Does my right hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lothian remember the occasion on which he uttered those words? Does he remember that he felt that he was entitled to ask, and that he was bound to claim, a hearty and cordial support in the great national crisis for the vindication of the law of the land? We wish "to vindicate the law of the land." We think we are bound to claim a hearty and cordial support in a great national crisis. We are assured in advance that we shall not receive that cordial and hearty support. We regret it, but none the less we cannot flinch from the task which is imposed upon us. I do not know who will tell on the side of my right hon. Friend and those who vote in favour of this Resolution. I presume it will be my hon. Friend the Member for Nottingham (Mr. Arnold Morley) and the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) as representing the National League. I presume that they, together, will go up to the Table of this House representing now the Party in Opposition—one the Representative of revolution and the other the Representative of surrender, and hon. Members will know on what side they are voting. Those who are voting with the right hon. Gentleman will be voting in favour of the revolutionary tribunals that are spread like a net-work all over Ireland; those who vote on this side will be upholding the tribunals of the land. Those who are voting with that side will be voting for the tribunals of an irresponsible Government, and those who vote on this side will be voting on behalf of those whose duty it is, in the words of my right hon. Friend, "to vindicate law and order."

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): The Chancellor of the Exchequer has given us a lesson in the Christian virtues —a subject he is, perhaps, fully entitled to deal with—and he then proceeded to separate the sheep from the goats. On the one side are virtue and daring, and on the other side surrender and guilt; on the Opposition side is revolution, vice, crime, and everything that is terrible, and on the other all the virtues under the sun. Now there is one thing, at any rate, which the right hon. Gentleman has familiarized the House with, and that is whenever the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) makes a slashing speech in the House we never realize the real eloquence and the vigour and power of his speech until the right hon. Gentleman feels it incumbent upon him to get up and make a feeble reply. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that that is the special function for which he was appointed to his present position by the Tory Party as a reward for his betrayal of the Party to which he belonged; and when he taunted the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby with holding a brief for the National League I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman for how many Parties and Institutions he has held a brief? I think that at the Election of 1885 he was glad of the assistance of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian.

MR. W. E. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think that at the Election of 1886 he was glad of the assistance of the noble Lord the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington). I think at the Election of 1887 he was glad of the assistance of Lord Salisbury. And now the right hon. Gentleman, who has *pirouetted* through every form of inconsistency, asks us to do what he himself two years ago denounced—namely, he asks us in a matter of the first importance to give a blank cheque to Lord Salisbury. Well, we decline to give a blank cheque to Lord Salisbury; and when the right hon. Gentleman reads the Proclamation of the Land League of 1881, and says that we are only doing what was done in 1881, and are only acting on the precedent of that time, allow me to remind him that not only the time and the actions, but the men, are wholly different. He asks us why the Government may not be trusted now as it was formerly; he asks us why may the Government not suppress the National League as they suppressed the Land League in 1881? Well, I will tell him why. In 1881 Ireland was passing, and had passed, through such a crisis that the Land Act of 1881 was passed by the Government. It was because the "No Rent" Manifesto was issued from Kilmainham Prison that the Land League was suppressed. What is the case now? If there is "no rent" in Ireland now, it is because of the act of God and not of any human association—it is because there are no crops in the country—and if Parliament was willing to trust the Government of 1881, is that any reason why we should trust a Government of landlords and the Chief Secretary and Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland? At this hour of the night I will not trouble the House with many words. I will only say that for the future, whatever happens in Ireland, apparently we shall not be responsible. For the future the Government have announced their policy to be the policy which must succeed. They have declared that the one panacea for Ireland is the suppression of the National League. If they do not succeed, what then? If outrages break out who will be responsible? Well, not us. You suppress our organization. You, who have not been able to put down Moonlighters or criminals of any kind, think that when you put down the National League you put down crime. It is true, you may put down the National League in a vague sense; but you will not put down Moonlighters. You can stop meetings of the branches; but you cannot stop people shooting into houses; you cannot stop people firing over the heads of isolated tenants. Why do not you direct attention to these open and overt forms of crime? The criminals are there and ripe for your sickle. Why are they allowed to continue in existence? We have been listening in this House continuously to the same kind of prophecies from coercive Ministers during my short time in Parliament. I turn from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman to the speech which poor Mr. Forster—God be merciful to him!—made in January, 1881, and I would advise the Chief Secretary for Ireland to get that speech off by heart. If he cannot get it off by heart, I would advise him to frame it in large letters in his office, and study it from time to time, because of all sad and melancholy reading the speech of that unfortunate gentleman is the most sad and melancholy. The right hon. Gentleman thought he knew everything, and was going to do everything. He was getting the whole thing fixed. Poor Mr. Forster was a wise gentleman. He had spent a great deal of time and money in Ireland, and in 1848 he was in sympathy with the people of that country, and spent a great deal of his means in trying to alleviate their condition; while the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has not spent a penny stamp upon them, and no more of his time than is occupied in going by one steamboat and returning by another. Poor Mr. Forster said, in that speech to which I refer, that the law of the League was supreme through those districts of Ireland—there was a reign of terror in the country; no man dared to take a farm, and so on. He would pass his Act, and then Mr. Parnell's policemen would be put down. The men who perpetrated the outrages were the men without whose help the speeches of Mr. Parnell and Mr. Dillon and Mr. Biggar would be harmless. It was those men who struck terror into the minds of the people, and they must strike terror into them. And yet, Sir, after you suppressed the League, and after you had had the Act in force for six months, after you had struck down every form of organization in the country, outrage increased by 2,000 in the course of a few months. Well, you had the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) and the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) in Kilmainham; and while Mr. Forster declared he had every murderer under lock and key you had the Invincibles supreme in Dublin, and Mr. Forster's own life was in hourly danger. I have not the smallest doubt that right hon. Gentlemen are just as conscientious, though not as experienced, as Mr. Forster. They say they have a painful duty to perform. Poor Mr. Forster had a painful duty to perform. Mr. Forster and the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland had the most painful duty of saying which of their fellow-subjects should be arrested on reasonable suspicion; but Mr. Forster made one admission which was due to the candour of his nature. He fought us like John Bull; he never flinched; and he never ran away at Question time. He did not put a dummy figure-head in his place. He spoke to the people in the market places. He went down to Galway and spoke to the people in the fairs, because he believed he had got hold of the right end of the stick. He thought the people were intimidated. That belief of his is clear from the speech he delivered on the 24th of January, 1881, for in that speech he said outrages were decreasing. He said—

> "I believe there are two reasons for it; one is that the gentlemen at the head of the Land League are using every power they possess to put a stop to outrages."

What was the other reason? We have heard so often and loudly from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham that the shadow of the Crimes Act is over Ireland. Mr. Forster went on to say—

> "I do not mean to say that in their speeches they have always intended to incite; but I think they have scarcely ever, if ever, had a proper sense of their responsibility in the words they have uttered. They are, however, much more powerful to incite to outrages than to control them. But I believe there is another influence at work. As in the case of the Westmeath Act in 1871 so it is now, that the men who plan and execute desist for fear of being arrested. They are aware that the police know who they are. My belief is that if you pass this Act you will cause an immense diminution of crime."

Be that as it may, whether crime increased or decreased, you have played your last card. Either you are going to succeed now or you will never succeed. You declare that the way to pacify Ireland is to proclaim the National League; but you do not take the advice of the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain), and say—"We will proceed by law, which is now to be the ordinary law, and put down intimidation by giving six months' imprisonment. We believe that the way to stop these outrages is to suppress the National League." That being so, the members of the National League have no further responsibility in the matter. And Members of this House who are members of the National League can no longer be charged in any sense or form with any responsibility for what may be done; but I wish to add my humble voice to that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) and of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) with respect to the duty of my fellow-citizens and countrymen in Ireland in this coming crisis. It will, perhaps, be news to the House to know that I did not always agree with my hon. Friend the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington), the Secretary of the National League, in what I thought his stringent methods against the branches of the League. I was appointed, in 1882, as the co-Secretary with my hon. Friend, but I never acted. But I now see my hon. Friend was right and I was wrong. I now see that the course he took was the right and proper one; but I see that instead of getting any thanks for it he is taunted by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I see that the most malignant sneers that can be hurled at those who desire to appease the minds of the people of the country, are indulged in by Members on the Treasury Bench; but though it is against nature to say so, because I have rather a fighting disposition, I must say that my experience in meeting English Members of this House, and especially of meetings in England, has solidified the opinion which was some time ago only in the germ, that the course to be taken in Ireland with our fellow-countrymen is the course of recommending them in the strictest possible way that we can, no matter what outrages they may be subjected to, to have faith in the good intentions and in the good feelings of the English people. Mr. Speaker, I never thought that the time would come when I would feel most conscientiously able to say these words. I thought my tongue would cleave before ever I would recommend Irishmen in Ireland to have faith in the justice of the English nation. I did not believe it. I would not have believed if anyone had prophesied it of me; but I must say that, having gone through several districts of England—aye, of Scotland too—and having been privileged with the association of many English Members in this House, I am convinced that the Irish people will be doing the right thing, not merely politically, but morally, and to the best interests of their country in the future, if they take the solemn advice that has been tendered them by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian on behalf of the English people, in whose name I think he may well claim to speak. I certainly envy the position of my hon. Friend the Member for North East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) in the fact that he has been the first man to be singled out for prosecution by Her Majesty's Government for defending his constituents. All you can do to him and to us is to put us in gaol. We care nothing for that, and I do not believe that you think we are such cowards as to care for it. You are merely using, as I believe, a political pretence to please your own landlord faction without any belief in its efficacy. If I could see any method for the resistance of this law which would bring me within the clutches of your Prison Authorities, I would, if it was consistent with my duty, cheerfully take the place of my hon. Friend. I hope in the future to take my proper place in the country wherever danger may be; but I hardly believe, in view of the Elections which have taken place recently, these methods of opening the eyes of the English people to the iniquities you are practising in Ireland are necessary. Of course, my experiences are short, but they are, at any rate, novel. My experience is that the English people only want to be friends with us, and I can say to the English people we only want to be friends with them, and that you are the men who propose to sow strife between us and the people. We have endeavoured—my hon. Friend (Mr. T. C. Harrington) I thought at the time too stringently—to keep the people of Ireland within the limits of the law. We have endeavoured to keep the branches of the League within the limit of legality. That privilege we are to be deprived of. You say that two Governments cannot exist in Ireland; you bow us out, and therefore with what face will you ask us later on to use our influence with the Irish people? My hon. Friend the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) will no longer be able to write letters to the Waterford branch of the League censuring them for any step on their part. The Waterford branch of the League will be non-existent; but there will be, as in every community—I presume there will be some in some of the constituencies of Tory Members—persons of a more advanced temperament. Are you going to put down the issuing of anonymous placards, such as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) endeavoured to palm off on the National League? Will they be proclaimed? Will the Lord Lieutenant attempt to proclaim the Kerry Moonlighters? Will he proclaim the writers of threatening letters? Where, then, will be the effective restraint and bridle that has been put upon these men so long as they were able to remain members of the branches of the League? It will be gone, and you will be face to face with men who have been taught by your legislation, in the powerful words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), in the scorching indictment he delivered against you, that lawlessness is only of one kind, and that the lawlessness which condemns my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) to six months' imprisonment for trying to stave off the eviction of his constituents is of the same quality as the lawlessness of those who commit Boycotting outrages, and of those who fire into dwellings. Possibly, at the beginning of next month, my hon. Friend (Mr. W. O'Brien) will be doing his six months, with brown bread for his breakfast and his three ounces of oatmeal for dinner. What more will the Government do to Moonlighters and to the writers of threatening letters? It is you who make no distinction—it is you who fuse all these so-called crimes into one mould. I must say it is astonishing, in view of the landlord outrages committed in Ireland, that with 1,800 branches of the League operating for six or seven years, we have only had the miserable statistics of outrages which have been quoted to-night by right hon. Gentlemen opposite. Why, Sir, I read only yesterday, in *The Pall Mall Gazette*, of an unfortunate tenant of the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Colonel King-Harman) begging for charity from the English people. That man had a bit of bog, and the Irish Under Secretary prosecuted him before two of his own magistrates for trespass, and he was fined. The man's solicitor took the case up to the Queen's Bench, and they quashed the order of the magistrates, but they refused to give the man his costs. The poor fellow had been put to £30 expenses to vindicate his right to the fuel that was to keep the warmth in his cabin during the winter months, and he appealed to the English people to supply him with the £30, the amount of the expenses he had been put to to prevent an assault on his property by the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. If that Gentleman, in his position and with the light of public opinion focussed upon him, will dare to do these acts and thus oppress the people, what may be expected of obscure landlords down the country, and what wonder the branches of the National League brim over with indignation? I never yet knew a land-grabber who was not a mean hound. He is a thief. He is a man who covets his neighbour's goods, a man who avails himself of your law to confiscate by the payment of half-a-year's rent the improvements made upon the farm by the toil of the tenant, which are as much the tenant's property as anything he can possess. The man who comes in takes the tenant's property. Do you expect that such a man is to be *fêted* by the National League? Do you think the National League pass resolutions that John So-and-so is to be shunned, that makes him be shunned? No, Sir; what makes him shunned is the instinct implanted in the heart and mind of every independent man who hates a mean, sneaking ruffian who steals his neighbour's property. And, furthermore, it is the instinct of self-preservation which compels these men, who would be powerless by themselves, to weld themselves into a compact organization. Some of these 1,800 branches have in five years committed mistakes. They have said—"You are not to hobnob with Jeremy or with Pat." I should like to know where you will find the records for seven years of an organization of 500,000 men as pure? Where do you get these records? There is a publication in Ireland which is supposed to be, and is to a large extent, the official organ of the League—namely, *United Ireland.* I have not heard its name mentioned in the course of this debate, strange to say. There are columns of branch reports week after week in *United Ireland.* Why have they not been quoted in this debate? Hon. Gentlemen seem to think that these branch reports are published so as to propagate the principles of the League. When I was connected with the editorial department of *United Ireland* these branch reports were a nuisance, and had to be omitted wholesale, owing to the want of space. These reports are used in the accusation against the National League. If you do not allow the branches to publish these resolutions and blow off steam in this way, what will you do? Public indignation in the different districts is not manufactured by the National League. I remember an old priest in County Donegal telling me that 40 years ago, before many of us were born, a man who grabbed a farm from another tenant who had been unjustly evicted would not get absolution if he went to Confession in the diocese of Raphoe unless he surrendered the farm. If that was the spirit 40 years ago, when the Irish people were uneducated, when they had no newspapers, no organizations, what is to be expected to-day, when they have all these advantages, and when they are represented in this House by a body of men who are able to take their own part? You might as well attempt to suppress the Atlantic Ocean as to attempt to suppress the National League. You may put a stop, it is true, to the printing of these resolutions; but can you prevent the people going to Mass? Can you prevent them meeting in the chapel yard? Can you help them meeting in the sacristy after

Mass? Can you prevent them going to a fair, or a football meeting, or a hurling? What will prevent Pat telling Tom, and Tom from telling Jerry—"It was a bad thing for So-and-so to take the land from which So-and-so had been evicted after a life of toil." I assert that I do believe that the Irish people, no matter what injustice they are subjected to, will be safe in trusting to the good sense and the good feeling of their English brethren; but, so far as we are concerned, we all have a duty to perform. This power which the Government are now seeking they will, no doubt, obtain; but we, who have been appointed as the Representatives of the Irish people, have a solemn duty before us. It is our duty to see that these poor people are not needlessly put upon by the present landlord Government, and that if any man shall be called upon to go to gaol it shall be us. It will be our duty, if possible, to step in between the peasantry of Ireland and the Representatives of the landlord Party in this House. For my own part, I have never been proud of my part in what has been called public life. Personally, I regard it as a very irksome task; but to the end of my days the proudest recollection of my life will be that I was a member of the Land League, and a member of the National League afterwards—that I was a member of that League before and after it was proclaimed. I remember, Sir, when one of the Phœnix Park prisoners was being sentenced to penal servitude for life by the late Justice Keogh, the Judge said to him—"Ah, So-and-so, you are a bad boy. You are a member of this organization, and this has not been your first offence; you were also a '48 man and an O'Connellite." "Yes," said the man; "I was an Irishman since I was born." I also, Sir, was an Irishman since I was born, and I am not the less so for desiring my countrymen to put faith and trust in the English people. I desire them to have regard to the magnificent manifestations of sympathy, those high demonstrations of the working class and democratic opinions which are taking place in this country; and, above all, I urge them to have regard to the fact that the best intellects of Europe are upon our side. I believe that the Irish people have regard to these facts; I believe that the politics of despair have been abandoned in Ireland; I believe that the politics of hope have been commenced. Sir, we should use a very different language, we should take up a very different attitude if this Government were supported in its crimes—if I may call them so—in its policy towards us by the English people. I say now we no longer regard the Government as the exponents of British feeling. We regard them as the exponents of landlord feeling; and if temporary inconvenience results to us from their action, we shall cheerfully bear with them, knowing well that in this we are doing not merely with the approval of Ireland, but we are doing with the blessing of God—that God who looks on the poor, who has seen their oppression and their misery, and who, after long years of bitter suffering and of trial, has raised up to Ireland friends the like of whom she never had before.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 195; Noes 272: Majority 77.

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Glam.)
Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Acland, A. H. D.
Allison, R. A.
Anderson, C. H.
Balfour, Sir G.
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Barry, J.
Biggar, J. G.
Blane, A.
Bolton, J. C.
Bradlaugh, C.
Bright, Jacob
Broadhurst, H.
Brown, A. L.
Brunner, J. T.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Byrne, G. M.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chamberlain, R.
Chance, P. A.
Channing, F. A.
Childers, rt. hon. H. C. E.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Coleridge, hon. B.
Collings, J.
Commins, A.
Condon, T. J.
Connolly, L.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Corbet, W. J.
Cossham, H.
Cox, J. R.
Crawford, D.
Cremer, W. R.
Crilly, D.
Deasy, J.
Dillon, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Duff, R. W.
Ellis, T. E.
Esmonde, Sir T. H. G.
Fenwick, C.
Ferguson R. C. Munro-
Finucane, J.
Flower, C.
Flynn, J. C.
Foley, P. J.
Forster, Sir C.
Fowler, rt. hon. H. H.
Fox, Dr. J. F.
Fuller, G. P.
Gardner, H.
Gilhooly, J.
Gill, H. J.
Gill, T. P.
Gladstone, right hon. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gray, E. D.
Gully, W. C.
Haldane, R. B.
Hanbury-Tracy, hon. F. S. A.
Harcourt, rt. hn. Sir W. G. V. V.

Harrington, E.
Harrington, T. C.
Harris, M.
Hayden, L. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Healy, T. M.
Hingley, B.
Hooper, J.
Howell, G.
Hunter, W. A.
James, C. H.
Joicey, J.
Jordan, J.
Kennedy, E. J.
Kenny, J. E.
Kenny, M. J.
Kenrick, W.
Labouchere, H.
Lacaita, C. C.
Lalor, R.
Lane, W. J.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Leahy, J.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Lockwood, F.
Macdonald, W. A.
Mac Neill, J. G. S.
M‘Arthur, A.
M‘Arthur, W. A.
M‘Cartan, M.
M‘Carthy, J.
M‘Carthy, J. H.
M‘Donald, P.
M‘Donald, Dr. R.
M‘Ewan, W.
M‘Kenna, Sir J. N.
M‘Lagan, P.
M‘Laren, W. S. B.
Mahony, P.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Mason, S.
Mayne, T.
Molloy, B. C.
Murphy, W. M.
Neville, R.
Newnes, G.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, J. F. X.
O'Brien, P.
O'Brien, P. J.
O'Brien, W.
O'Connor, A.
O'Connor, J. (Kerry)
O'Connor, J. (Tipperary)
O'Connor, T. P.
O'Doherty, J. E.
O'Gorman Mahon, The
O'Hanlon, T.
O'Hea, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Parker, C. S.
Parnell, C. S.
Pease, A. E.
Pickard, B.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Pinkerton, J.
Portman, hon. E. B.
Power, P. J.
Power, R.
Priestley, B.
Provand, A. D.
Pugh, D.
Pyne, J. D.
Quinn, T.
Rathbone, W.
Redmond, J. E.
Redmond, W. H. K.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reynolds, W. J.
Roberts, J. B.
Robertson, E.
Robinson, T.
Roe, T.
Rowlands, J.
Rowlands, W. B.
Rowntree, J.
Schwann, C. E.
Sexton, T.
Sheehan, J. D.
Sheehy, D.
Sheil, E.
Shirley, W. S.
Smith, S.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stansfeld, right hon. J.
Stepney - Cowell, Sir A. K.
Stewart, H.
Storey, S.
Stuart, J.
Sullivan, D.
Sullivan, T. D.
Summers, W.
Sutherland, A.
Swinburne, Sir J.
Tanner, C. K.
Trevelyan, right hon. Sir G. O.
Tuite, J.
Vivian, Sir H. H.
Wallace, R.
Watt, H.
Will, J. S.
Williams, A. J.
Williams, J. Powell-
Williamson, J.
Wilson, H. J.
Winterbotham, A. B.
Woodall, W.
Woodhead, J.

TELLERS.

Marjoribanks, rt. hon. E.
Morley, A.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ainslie, W. G.
Aird, J.
Allsopp, hon. P.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Baird, J. G. A.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Balfour, G. W.
Banes, Major G. E.
Baring, T. C.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bartley, G. C. T.
Bass, H.
Bates, Sir E.
Baumann, A. A.
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beaumont, H. F.
Beckett, W.
Bentinck, Lord H. C.
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bickford-Smith, W.
Biddulph, M.
Bigwood, J.
Birkbeck, Sir E.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Bolitho, T. B.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Bright, right hon. J.
Bristowe, T. L.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burghley, Lord
Campbell, Sir A.
Campbell, J. A.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Cavendish, Lord E.
Chaplin, right hon. H.
Charrington, S.
Churchill, rt. hn. Lord R. H. S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Coghill, D. H.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Commerell, Adml. Sir J. E.
Compton, F.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corbett, J.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Crossley, Sir S. B.
Crossman, Gen. Sir W.
Cubitt, right hon. G.
Currie, Sir D.
Curzon, Viscount
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
De Cobain, E. S. W.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D,
Dorington, Sir J. E.
Duncan, Colonel F.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Ebrington, Viscount
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Elliot, hon. H. F. H.
Elton, C. I.
Evelyn, W. J.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, Sir A. O.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Field, Admiral E.
Finch, G. H.
Finlay, R. B.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitzwilliam, hon. W. J. W.
Fitz - Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fowler, Sir R. N.
Fraser, General C. C.
Fry, L.
Fulton, J. F.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Gorst, Sir J. E.
Goschen, rt. hn. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Greenall, Sir G.
Grimston, Viscount
Grove, Sir T. F.
Hall, C.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Hanbury, R. W.
Hankey, F. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Havelock - Allan, Sir H. M.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Herbert, hon. S.
Hermon-Hodge, R. T.
Hervey, Lord F.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hoare, S.
Hobhouse, H.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.

Holloway, G.
Hornby, W. H.
Houldsworth, Sir W. H.
Howard, J.
Howard, J. M.
Hughes, Colonel E.
Hunt, F. S.
Hunter, Sir W. G.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Jennings, L. J.
Johnston, W.
Kelly, J. R.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Kenyon, hon. G. T.
Kenyon - Slaney, Col. W.
Kerans, F. H.
Kimber, H.
King - Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knowles, L.
Kynoch, G.
Lafone, A.
Lambert, C.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lea, T.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Lees, E.
Legh, T. W.
Leighton, S.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Llewellyn, E. H.
Long, W. H.
Lowther, hon. W.
Lowther, J. W.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclean, F. W.
Maclean, J. M.
Maclure, J. W.
Madden, D. H.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Malcolm, Col. J. W.
Mallock, R.
Manners, right hon. Lord J. J. R.
Marriott, right hon. W. T.
Maskelyne, M. H. N. Story-
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Adml. R. C.
Mildmay, F. B.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
More, R. J.
Morrison, W.
Mount, W. G.
Mowbray, rt. hon. Sir J. R.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Mulholland, H. L.
Muncaster, Lord
Muntz, P. A.
Murdoch, C. T.
Newark, Viscount
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Paget, Sir R. H.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Powell, F. S.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Richardson, T.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robinson, B.
Ross, A. H.
Rothschild, Baron F. J. de
Round, J.
Royden, T. B.
Russell, T. W.
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. M.
Saunderson, Col. E. J.
Sellar, A. C.
Selwin-Ibbetson, right hon. Sir H. J.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Smith, A.
Spencer, J. E.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stanley, E. J.
Stephens, H. C.
Stewart, M. J.
Sutherland, T.
Swetenham, E.
Talbot, J. G.
Tapling, T. K.
Taylor, F.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Vernon, hon. G. R.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Walsh, hon. A. H. J.
Waring, Colonel T.
Watkin, Sir E. W.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
West, Colonel W. C.
Weymouth, Viscount
Whitley, E.
Whitmore, C. A.
Wiggin, H.
Wilson, Sir S.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Wolmer, Viscount
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Yerburgh, R. A.
Young, C. E. B.

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

WAYS AND MEANS.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into the said Committee."

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I rise, Sir, to move that this House do now adjourn, and I do it at this late hour partly because I think the Motion should be made to-night, and partly with a view to the convenience of the House to-morrow, as I am sure the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) would prefer that I should not move the adjournment at the Sitting to-morrow. I move the adjournment of the House in connection with an answer which I received, or, rather, which I did not receive, from the Secretary of State for the Home Department at an early period of this evening. I should be very sorry to waste the time of the House upon any personal question, although I take it that it is the right of every Member of this House to interrogate any Minister of the Crown with reference to the discharge of his public duty, as it is the duty of a Minister of the Crown to give an answer. I asked the Home Secretary this evening whether he was prepared to sanction the continued imprisonment of three individuals in Leicester Gaol upon a charge in respect of which two individuals had appealed, these two being released from prison, and the other three, under an order of the Court, remaining in prison and serving out their time of imprisonment, pending an appeal which cannot, of course, be disposed of until the month of November? In putting this Question I characterized the decision of the magistrates as a ridiculous one, and I repeat that description of it now. A large number of individuals have been brought before the magistrates at Stamford for holding a religious service in the Market Place at Stamford, which contains accommodation for 2,000 people, and they have been sent to prison upon the technical charge that they have obstructed the highway, the real offence they have committed being the holding of religious services in the Market Place of Stamford.

The right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary was pleased to read me a reproof for having criticized the decision of the magistrates as ridiculous. I repeat the offence. But, whether my description of the decision be accurate or not, the Home Secretary was bound to have told me whether he did or did not intend that these three individuals should remain in prison. I then asked another Question—namely, whether I was to understand that it was the policy of the Home Secretary and of the Government to show sympathy with and approval of this attempt to persecute Nonconformists? And to that Question the Home Secretary thought it right not to give any reply. [An hon. Member: Quite right.] An hon. Member says "Quite right." I beg to differ from that hon. Member. The Home Secretary is, although he does not sometimes quite agree with that view, responsible to this House for any advice he gives to the Crown with reference to the administration of the Criminal Law of this country.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I rise to Order, Mr. Speaker. There is important Scotch Business down for to-night, and I wish to know whether the right hon. Gentleman is in Order in bringing forward this question on the Motion for the adjournment of the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: No doubt the course taken by the right hon. Gentleman is an unusual one, and it may become a very inconvenient one; but this is the substantive Motion he has interposed between the Orders of the Day. I cannot stop any hon. Gentleman who likes to take such a course.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Is the right hon. Gentleman entitled to go into questions which do not strictly appertain to the adjournment of the House?

Mr. SPEAKER: On a Motion for Adjournment a large range of subjects may be gone into.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: This is a most important matter. I understand that 14 more persons are to be brought up to-morrow for precisely the same offence, and will be sent to prison. I think this subject is quite as important as Scotch Business. I do not, however, intend to detain the House many minutes. All I ask the Home Secretary to do in this case is what his Predecessors have invariably done. Previous Home Secretaries have invariably corrected mistakes which local magistrates have made in the administration of the law. It is as common a practice on the part of the Home Office almost as the signing of the name of the Home Secretary to revise the decision of magistrates and to reduce sentences given by them. There have been already 20 persons sent to prison at Stamford for the offence of preaching in the Stamford Market—sent to associate with felons and vagabonds for 21 days. I venture to say that that is a state of things which this country will not endure. I have no wish to express in any way an opinion upon the legal question which is now going before the Courts—namely, the question whether the Market Square is or is not a highway. Upon the decision of that question will depend a great deal the right of public meeting in open spaces in this country. I have no wish to prejudge that question. Let it be decided by the Court of Queen's Bench in November; but I do ask that, until the question is settled, these well-meaning and conscientious people, who are endeavouring to do something to improve the moral and religious condition of the masses of their fellow-countrymen, should not be sent to prison as common vagabonds and thieves.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Henry H. Fowler.*)

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am myself a Nonconformist, and I suppose I am about the last man in this House who wants to see the religious services of Nonconformists interfered with. I am sorry if the right hon. Gentleman supposed for a moment that I was wanting in courtesy to him. Nothing was farther from my thought or wish. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well how this case stands. The Justices of Stamford are persons appointed by law to administer the law in their own town. They know the circumstances of their town; they know the situation of the streets of their town; they know the wishes of the inhabitants of their town; and it would be presumptuous in me, especially when the case is now before the Court of Appeal, to express a confident opinion, which I do not in the least find fault with the right hon. Gentleman, who holds strong feelings on the matter, expressing—namely, that the magistrates have given a ridiculous decision. For all I know, he may be right, and the magistrates may be wrong; but the information at my command does not enable me to pronounce that absolute condemnation of the magistrates which the right hon. Gentleman has done. I am assured by the magistrates that religious feeling or prejudice has had nothing to do with this decision. Of course, there was in one sense a religious ceremony. These people belonged to what is called the Salvation Army, and they were holding a service—if it is to be called a service. There was a service—I suppose it is a service—in the square. [*Cries of* "Why not?"] I am not saying it is not a service, but I believe one does not generally associate the celebrations of the Salvation Army with any particular form of religious rite. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] I do not mean to be at all disrespectful to those people. I should certainly not have called it a service. I dare say it is a service; but I do not know whether it is or not. The magistrates inform me that the service attracted a concourse of people so large and so noisy that it constituted an obstruction of the thoroughfare. It would ill become me to say whether that is a right decision or not. I am not the authority to say whether there was an obstruction or not. Neither does it become me to say whether the square is a public highway. That seems to many men a doubtful proposition. It may be that the right hon. Gentleman is perfectly right in describing the decision of the magistrates as a ridiculous decision; but the question is now before the Court of Appeal. As I understand the right hon. Gentleman, he wants me to interpose while the case is pending before the Court of Appeal—he wants me, in respect of the defendants who have not appealed, to interpose with the mercy of the Crown to advise Her Majesty to remit the penalty altogether. I do not dispute, Sir, that I have a right to do that if the case is perfectly clear; but I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will not tell me it is my duty to do that in a case which is not perfectly clear. Unless I saw my way to as strong a judgment as he himself has formed as to the decision of the magistrates, it would not be right for me to interfere. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that imprisonment in default of the payment of a fine varies with the amount of the fine. In all those cases where the fines are above £1—[Mr. Henry H. Fowler: £1 and costs]—I have not the power to remit a fine, and the right hon. Gentleman is aware that by a very recent Act of Parliament—the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879—magistrates may give one month's imprisonment in case of default to pay a fine. If the fine is under £1 the imprisonment is 14 days; if the fine is over £1 the imprisonment is a month. The magistrates in this case ordered an imprisonment of three weeks in default of the payment of the fine. I think the right hon. Gentleman has not given an accurate definition of the sort of imprisonment these men are undergoing. They are not classed with felons. Of course they are under confinement, and I am not going to minimize the hardship of that. I have often thought very strongly that people who are sent to prison because they will not, for conscientious reasons, pay a fine, ought to receive different treatment from people guilty of an offence of a criminal character; but I have no authority to order different treatment of such people. The law does not permit me to do it. The rules under which the discipline of prisons are regulated do not depend upon me, and I cannot alter them. The men have gone to prison not because they cannot pay the fine, but because they will not, for conscientious reasons, pay it.

Mr. HENRY H. FOWLER: The men were asked whether they had any goods or any property, and they said they had nothing but what they stood up in.

Mr. MATTHEWS: I was not aware of that. I understood that these men—and I confess that I thought it did them great credit—said they declined to pay anything at all, and would go to prison for conscientious motives. The House knows that there are a number of people who go to prison for such motives. People will not have their children vaccinated upon conscientious grounds. I am sorry to see people imprisoned undergoing all the hardships prison rules impose for such reasons. But it would not be right in me to set about the liberation of all the people sent to prison because they will not pay fines or obey the order of magistrates to vaccinate their children. One cannot help sympathizing with people who are punished in this way; but the law prevents me from taking the course the right hon. Gentleman suggests, unless I can see my way to the particular conclusion the right hon. Gentleman has arrived at—namely, that the decision of the magistrates is a ridiculous one.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: The right hon. Gentleman misunderstands me. What I referred to as ridiculous was the punishment of these people really for preaching, the nominal offence being the technical charge of obstructing the highway. All I ask is that the right hon. Gentleman should extend the prerogative of mercy towards these poor people who have already undergone a fortnight's imprisonment for this offence.

MR. MATTHEWS: Will the right hon. Gentleman pardon me. I must take the facts as they appear in evidence before the magistrates. The magistrates assure me that there was real obstruction of that square. The right hon. Gentleman talks of the magistrates hiding themselves behind the technical charge of obstruction. The magistrates further assure me that in endeavouring to put down these assemblages in the square they were acting according to the wishes of the inhabitants of the town of Stamford. The residents of the square have appealed over and over again to the magistrates to prevent these assemblages, and each of the men now undergoing imprisonment has been cautioned by the magistrates and asked not to assemble crowds in the public square, but to go somewhere else. They have refused to do so, and it is only after repeated warnings that the magistrates have put the law into force. In the present state of the case, I cannot assume that the magistrates have acted improperly. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that I had no intention to administer a reproof to him; let me say, further, that neither on my part nor on the part of Her Majesty's Government is there the slightest desire to interfere with anything which seems like a proper exercise of religious feeling on the part of any one of Her Majesty's subjects.

MR. SPEAKER: As there seems to be a little misconception, let me say how the matter stands. When the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) rose to move the adjournment of the House, the impression conveyed to my mind was that he wished the House to adjourn on account of the lateness of the hour. I was not aware he was going to raise a debate upon the Motion for Adjournment interpolated between the Orders of the Day. Of course, upon a Motion for the Adjournment of the House on the ground of the lateness of the hour, a question might be put and an answer given; but it would be quite contrary to every precedent to interpolate between the Orders of the Day a Motion for Adjournment, and to discuss upon such Motion a subject not at all relevant to any Order of the Day. I hope the House will not establish this precedent. It was only by a misconception on my part, and I think on the part of hon. Members also, that what has taken place has been allowed at all.

MR. HENRY H. FOWLER: Allow me, Sir, to say one word in explanation, I understood I was complying with the Rules of the House. I waited until the Orders of the Day were called, and then moved the Motion for Adjournment, though not as an interpolation between two Orders. I apprehended I was in Order, on an Order of the Day being called, in moving that the House do adjourn. I was, perhaps, too anxious to save the time of the House, and did not explain myself fully. I was under the impression that I was entitled to move the adjournment of the House upon the ground of the action the Government took earlier in the evening. I can recall many precedents when the action of the Government has been challenged in this way—cases in which hon. Members have said it is not right they should proceed with the Business in hand until they have received from the Government some explanation upon a given point. I, of course, bow to your ruling, Sir; and if I am wrong I beg to withdraw the Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: I thought the right hon. Member was moving a *bonâ fide* adjournment of the House, and it was on that understanding that I allowed the Question to be put.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee upon *Monday* next.

SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND ACT (1885) AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*].—[BILL 360.]

(*The Lord Advocate.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) I beg to move the following New Clause:—

"That Section eight of 'The Secretary for Scotland Act, 1885,' shall be amended so as to read as follows:—The Secretary shall have the place, trust, and office of Keeper of Her Majesty's Seal, appointed by the Treaty of Union to be kept and made use of in Scotland, in place of the Great Seal of Scotland, with all such powers, privileges, and liberties as do by law and custom belong to the same; and it shall be lawful for the Secretary to affix the said Seal to certificates issued by him, relating to matters within his official cognizance, in any case in which he shall deem it expedient to do so."

New Clause (Secretary for Scotland may affix Seal in certain cases,)—(*Mr. E. Robertson,*)—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) was understood to oppose the clause for the reason that the Act of Union appeared to limit the application of the Seal to matters relating to private rights and to matters confined to the Kingdom of Scotland.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I am afraid I cannot accept the reason the Lord Advocate has given for not accepting the clause. I will explain the object of the clause. There are many cases in which incorporated Companies belonging to Scotland, but doing business out of Scotland, find that their property in foreign countries is absolutely imperilled for the reason that proof of their incorporation being challenged they cannot prove it except under the Great Seal. Now, it is possible, no doubt, to get the Great Seal of Great Britain applied; but it would be more convenient if we could get the Great Seal of Scotland applied; and all I ask is that the Secretary for Scotland should have power to use that Seal in every case in which it may seem desirable to do so. The Lord Advocate only gives as a reason why the clause should not be accepted that the provision of the Act of Union appears to limit the application of the Seal to matters relating to private rights, and contained in the Kingdom of Scotland. So far as that goes, it appears to me that, even if the Lord Advocate's reading is correct, all that I ask the House to do is to amend in an insignificant and unimportant particular an Act which has been amended over and over again. I trust that the House will not permit itself, from pedantic regard for an Act, to absolutely refrain, practically, from doing that which the convenience of the country demands. A great deal of valuable property of which the right hon. and learned Gentleman has no notion will be placed in peril if this Amendment is not passed. I speak for my own constituents in this matter; there is no less an amount than £9,000,000 worth of property invested by my constituents in the United States alone. Every cent of that money may be imperilled if a clause like this is not accepted. At all events, there will be great risk and inconvenience in connection with the protection of the property. I sincerely trust that the House will refuse the guidance of the right hon. and learned Gentleman upon this matter, which is of great importance to the commercial community of Scotland. I trust the House will refuse to accept the reason which he has alleged against the proposal. His reason, in my opinion, is based upon pedantic and historic considerations which have nothing to do with the business and the convenience of the country.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 106; Noes 148: Majority 42.—(Div. List, No. 427.)

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.): I beg to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Provand.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I trust the House will dispose of this Bill. Having done so, we shall not propose to take any other measure.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I think the example we have just had of the amount of consideration which we may expect to have from the Government in regard to Scotch Bills is not such as to give us any very great encouragement to support the Government in their attempt to dispose of Scotch Business at such a late hour as this. The Government have nothing to complain of on the part of the Scotch Members this Session; but I think we have a great deal to complain of as far as the Government are concerned. We have gone out of our way to support them in advancing Scotch Business without any discussion whatever; but they have given us an example of the small extent to which they are willing to respect our affairs. I think we are bound, as a protest, to support the Motion of my hon. Friend if he goes to a Division.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): There is only one more Amendment to be proposed, with regard to which I hope the Government will be willing to accept a reasonable compromise. It is altogether against the interest of Scotland that the debate should be postponed.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): Apart altogether from the peculiar tactics of the Government in over-riding the overwhelming Scotch opinion in reference to this matter, some consideration ought to be paid to the position of the officials of the House. I protest against the officials only being allowed three or four hours sleep out of the 24. As this is contentious Business and we have to be here again at 12 o'clock, I trust the debate will now be adjourned.

MR. FINLAY (Inverness, &c.): I hope we shall be allowed to proceed. There is only one important Amendment to be considered, and I understand it will not occupy much time. In going to a Division we shall be only wasting more time.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.): I venture to hope that, considering there is only one other Amendment which may be disposed of in a few minutes, my hon. Friends will allow us to proceed.

MR. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.): It might influence hon. Members on this side of the House if they received any indication that some concession will be made.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): This is a matter which really requires a great deal of consideration. If the Government will agree to omit Sub-section 2 altogether, I quite admit we may finish the Bill at once. If they are not prepared to agree to that we ought, in view of the complicated nature of the matter, to insist upon an adjournment.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Further consideration, as amended, *deferred* till *To-morrow.*

MOTIONS.

SUITORS' RELIEF BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Kimber, Bill to enable Suitors to have audience before tribunals, either in person or by counsel or solicitor, and to enable counsel to practise as solicitors, and solicitors as counsel: and for other purposes, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Kimber, Mr. Boord, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Baumann, Mr. Howard Vincent, General Goldsworthy, Mr. Kerans, Mr. Byron Reed, Mr. Molloy, and Dr. Clark.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 386.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I think the Government ought to tell us something about the arrangements for to-morrow; we have been left entirely in the dark as to them.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I understand that as we meet at 12 o'clock, the Wednesday Rule will apply to the Sitting.

MR. CONYBEARE: We have a right to complain of the conduct of the Government. It was pointed out at the commencement of the Sitting how exceedingly inconvenient it would be to those hon. Members who wanted to get away, if the statement as to the arrangements of Business to-morrow were postponed until the end of the Sitting.

MR. RITCHIE: It was entirely out of consideration for the House that my hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) postponed the statement until late in the evening. He desired to consult the convenience of the House. He did make inquiries, and he found it would be convenient to the great majority of Members that they should be able to get away at 6 o'clock to-morrow.

MR. CONYBEARE: Then why not have told us?

MR. T. M. HEALY: What Bill will be taken?

MR. RITCHIE: The Allotments Bill.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The Allotments Bill only?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House adjourned at half after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 27th August, 1887.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILLS — *Committee* — Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Acts Amendment [252], *debate adjourned.*
Committee — Report — Labourers' Allotments [329-387].

MOTION.

SITTING OF THE HOUSE (SATURDAY).

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) moved—

> "That the Sitting of the House this day be held subject to the Standing Orders that regulate the Sitting of the House on Wednesdays."

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said, he had given Notice that he would oppose this Motion. He really put it to the First Lord of the Treasury whether they were to learn nothing by experience in that House? They were brought down there last Saturday and absolutely no Business was done, the proposition before the House being talked out deliberately till a quarter to 6 o'clock; and they might all just as well have been at home or in the country. He objected to the House being made a plaything in that way, and he had known no previous Session when this regulation was in force on Saturdays. As a matter of fact, at the close of the Session a great deal of Business had to be done on Saturdays; and he said that this Motion was putting a premium on Obstruction, and he would oppose it.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I, Sir, endeavour, as far as I possibly can, to consider the convenience of the great majority of the House; and I desire to act on the presumption that, although there may be some Members who may be disposed to obstruct the Business of the House, I should not be justified in supposing that they would receive sufficient support to entitle or require me to make provision against deliberate Obstruction, carried on with a view of preventing the proper conduct of the Business of the House. I will not say more in regard to the proceedings of last Saturday than that after there had been a considerable amount of debate an hon. Gentleman did prevent the putting of the Question when the majority of the House were, as I believe, ready to come to a decision upon it. But we must not surrender altogether the reliance which we desire to place on the good sense, the moderation, and the wish, I believe, of the great majority of the Members of this House, both to forward the Public Business, and to consider the convenience and advantage of the Members of the House generally. I hope, therefore, that the hon. Member for South Tyrone will not think it right to press his opposition to this Motion; because, as I am informed, it would be greatly for the convenience of hon. Members generally to get away at 6 o'clock. If we should fail altogether to obtain that concurrence in forwarding the Public Business which I am sure will conduce to the credit of every hon. Member, on whatever side he may sit, then I shall abandon all hope of being able to conduct the Business of the House with reference to the convenience of the greater number of its Members, and we shall be obliged to rely on what may be called the brute force of a majority. But I would earnestly appeal to hon. Gentlemen here to-day, having due regard to the very important position which Members of this great Assembly hold in the country, or should hold, irrespective of the particular Party to which they may belong, to facilitate the transaction of Public Business rather than to hinder or in any way delay it. At this period of the Session, the very exhausting labours which have fallen on those who have attended regularly, and, still more, the heavy demand made on the officers of this House and on the Chairman of Committees, justify, I think, the appeal which I make that there should be some consideration for the strength that is allotted to man—some consideration given to those who have great and important and responsible duties to discharge. I therefore hope that we shall get through the Business of the day with that amount of rapidity, consistently with the proper consideration of the matters before us, which will enable us to adjourn not later than 6 o'clock.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES (Mr. Courtney) (Cornwall, Bodmin) wished to be allowed to correct the view put before the House by the hon. Member for South Tyrone, or, at any rate, to state a different aspect of the question. No doubt, the experience of last Saturday was not entirely satisfactory; but it stood alone. The hon. Member said that the day was wasted, and referred to an undoubted fact that at a quarter to 6 o'clock a somewhat irresponsible Member got up and talked, obviously with the view of preventing any action being taken on the Vote. But the time was not wasted, because an extremely important subject—the question of Egypt—had been discussed and practically exhausted; and even if the hon. Member had not done as he did, it did not follow that the Vote would have been taken on that day. There was still the important question of our relations with France with regard to the New Hebrides, which, undoubtedly, would have had to be discussed, and he was not quite sure that they would have got the Vote under any circumstances. He hoped that the Members of the House would work together to get through the Business before them, and would proceed to do so at once.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) suggested that it would be better to drop the technical Motion, and act on the understanding, and close the Sitting about 6 o'clock. The Committee would then have a protection against talking out. As to the allusion to brute force, the right hon. Gentleman should not say too much, for the Government might find themselves like toothless lions, not having a 200 majority. He wished to ask whether it had been correctly stated last night that no other Business besides the Allotments Bill would be taken to-day?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, that with the view of stopping the discussion, he would say that the Government had no desire to take any opposed Business whatever that day after the Allotments Bill had been disposed of. He endeavoured on the previous night to ascertain the general feeling as to the adjournment, and he found that it was in favour of the 6 o'clock Rule being enforced.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) said, that the county Members on the Opposition side of the House would do their utmost to bring the discussion on the Allotments Bill in Committee to a close before 6 o'clock that evening. All they asked was that their Amendments should be met in a conciliatory spirit.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.) expressed his dissent from the theory of the hon. Member for South Tyrone as to last Saturday having been lost by the talk-out on that occasion. The subject was one which had to be discussed, and the discussion was taken.

Motion *agreed to.*

QUESTIONS.

HIGHWAY ACTS — THE SALVATION ARMY — RELIGIOUS SERVICES AT STAMFORD.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY (Devon, Honiton): I wish to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is the fact that members of the Salvation Army imprisoned at Stamford were unable from poverty to pay the fine imposed upon them by local magistrates for obstructing the public thoroughfare, and that in default of payment of the fine they have not already been imprisoned for 14 days; whether, under those circumstances, he does not think the authority of the law has been sufficiently vindicated; and, whether he can see his way to recommend that the remainder of the term of imprisonment of these people be remitted?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I believe the facts are as stated in the Question of my hon. Friend. Moreover, the prisoners in question have been unable, like the two others who were sentenced under similar circumstances, to secure the benefit of an appeal on the question of law involved. In consideration of these facts, and, without at all impugning the decision of the magistrates, I have given directions that they shall be released from further imprisonment.

Mr. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) said, he had himself intended to question the right hon. Gentleman on this subject; but after the reply of the Home Secretary it was not necessary for him to do so.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT.

MR. M'CARTAN (Down, S.) inquired, upon what day the Land Law (Ireland) Act would be printed and circulated amongst the Members? Several Irish Representatives were every day receiving numbers of letters through the post with regard to the issue of the Bill, and there was some anxiety on their part to give a definite reply in the matter.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, the Act in question had been printed, and could now be obtained in the proper quarter.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL—DEFINITION OF THE TERM "ALLOTMENT."

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked, Whether the President of the Local Government Board had prepared any definition of the meaning of an allotment?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, he thought this was a question that, if it was to be raised, should be raised in Committee on the Allotments Bill. He had considered the matter, and had come to the conclusion that, undoubtedly, an allotment did include a garden allotment. But if he were to insert any words to define what was an allotment, he should probably not extend, but restrict, the meaning of the word.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL

[BILL 329.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. W. H. Long.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 25th August.*]

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 4 (Improvement and adaptation of land for allotments).

THE CHAIRMAN: There is the following Amendment on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for the Ashburton Division of Devonshire (Mr. Seale-Hayne):—Clause 4, page 3, line 18, after "think fit," add—

> "And may let or sell any allotment or allotments to the board or managers of any public elementary school for the purposes of technical education."

This Amendment is outside the scope of the Bill, and therefore cannot be put.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Management of allotments).

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I had given Notice of an Amendment, in page 3, line 19, to leave out "provisions of this Act," and to insert "approval of the Local Government Board," but I will not move the Amendment, as it stands. I would propose, instead of the words "provisions of this Act," to insert "the approval of the Local Government Board and the provisions of this Act." The object of this Amendment is to effect a purpose which is sought to be carried out also by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) in an Amendment he has lower down on the Paper. What is wished is that the regulations to be laid down by the Sanitary Authority in regard to the management of allotments should be subject to the approval of the Local Government Board.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 19, to leave out the words "provisions of this Act," in order to insert "approval of the Local Government Board and the provisions of this Act."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am prepared to accept the principle of the Amendment, but I do not think that the wishes of the hon. Member himself would be fulfilled by the acceptance of the whole of those words. We should have some other words in order to carry out the object in view. I propose to accept the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division (Mr. Chaplin), which will make Sub-section 2 of the clause read thus—

> "All regulations under this section shall not be of any force unless and until they have been confirmed by the Local Government Board, in like manner and subject to the like provisions as

in the case of bye-laws under 'The Public Health Act, 1875.'"

Mr. CHANNING: Then I will withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Viscount EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock): I do not wish to detain the Committee for more than a moment or two, but I had put down my Amendment on the Paper with a view of limiting to the section "Urban Sanitary Authorities," and introducing another Amendment later, making other arrangements for rural parishes. That has been rendered unnecessary to a great extent by the Amendment of which the President of the Local Government Board has himself given Notice. I am ready to withdraw my Amendment in favour of that of the right hon. Gentleman if he will explain one or two points to me. I do not see anything in his new clause as to the power of the Local Managers in rural parishes to draw up rules, and I do not see anything putting any restraint upon them. I presume the right hon. Gentleman proposes to put in something to that effect in a further Amendment of the clause. Perhaps I had better move my Amendment, in order to give the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of explaining the matter.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 19, before the word "Sanitary," insert the word "Urban."—(*Viscount Ebrington.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Urban' be there inserted."

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): What the noble Viscount proposes, so far as I can understand it, is that the Urban Sanitary Authority should have power to draw up regulations, and that the rural managers should have power, subject to the consent of the Sanitary Authority. I am sorry to say that we are not prepared to accept that. We must adhere to the principle that the Sanitary Authority shall draw up the regulations. We think it desirable that the regulations should be as far as possible of a uniform character and subject to the consent and approval of the Local Government Board, and we propose, in a subsequent section of the Bill, to introduce Amendments in such forms as to effect this object.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): This Amendment raises a question of very great importance—namely, the construction the Government are prepared to place on the words Sanitary Authority in that proposed new clause. I should like to say one or two words on the subject, without going into it at any great length. If I am in Order in making a suggestion as to the course the Government might conveniently take on an Amendment which is not now before the Committee, I should say that they would greatly shorten the business, if they would define what they propose to do with regard to urban sanitary districts, and with regard to rural sanitary districts. I have an Amendment upon the Paper which would extend the same privilege of electing "Allotment Managers or "Wardens," or whatever name is chosen, to urban sanitary districts other than incorporated towns governed by a Town Council. I think it is a question of great importance how far the Government are prepared to go in this matter. The Amendment of the noble Lord really raises the question, and I should like to know what position the Government will take with regard to this and to my own Amendment? I hope they may be disposed to meet my own Amendment in the same spirit they are meeting that of the noble Lord.

Mr. RITCHIE: The position which the Government propose to take up with reference to urban districts, as distinguished from rural districts, with reference to the election of allotment boards or allotments wardens, is this. We do not propose that in urban districts—whether municipal boroughs or local government districts—there should be any power of election at all. There may be wardens or managers in urban districts; but we propose that they should be appointed by the Sanitary Authority, and the reason is pretty obvious. Urban districts, whether local government districts or municipal boroughs, are districts, as a whole, for rating purposes. They are quite distinct from rural districts in this respect, because the rate in the latter, if there be any rate for this purpose, will have to be borne by the parish for which the allotments are provided. Therefore, we think that a good deal is to be said for the parishioners, whoever they may be, in a particular parish of the rural district, having the power to elect wardens. That does not apply to urban districts, where the Sanitary Authority is of a more satisfactory character than in rural districts. In that case we do not propose that there should be an election of wardens in the parish as in other portions of the district, but that the wardens shall be appointed as a whole.

Mr. CHANNING: Should I be in Order in commenting now on what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman as to the election of those bodies in urban sanitary districts? If I should not be in Order, I will reserve my remarks until we reach my Amendment.

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): As to the point raised by the hon. Gentleman behind me (Mr. Channing), I agree with what has been said by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board. I think it would be better that the regulations should, in every case, be drawn up on the responsibility of the Local Authority. I venture to assume that when this Bill becomes an Act, the Local Government Board will consider the propriety of drafting model regulations which may be adopted, with any local modifications which may be necessary, by the various Sanitary Authorities. It is desirable that the regulations should be as far as possible uniform.

Mr. RITCHIE: Yes; I will undertake to say that this matter shall be considered with a view to carrying out the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. CHANNING: With a view to shortening the proceedings, I would urge my point now in the light of what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). Perhaps the right hon. Gentlemen who have spoken are not quite as well acquainted with the circumstances which have induced me to place my Amendment on the Paper as I am myself. I have no doubt that as regards boroughs——

The CHAIRMAN: I do not say the hon. Gentleman is out of Order in discussing this matter now; but I would point out that he has an Amendment on this subject on the Paper, and that if he discusses the subject when he brings on his Amendment he will not be saving time by going into the matter now.

Mr. CHANNING: I am not referring to the Amendment lower down on the Paper. I am simply referring to the question of the regulations.

The CHAIRMAN: The point can be discussed later.

Viscount EBRINGTON: I will withdraw my Amendment, so that the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman can be brought on.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): I beg to move, in page 3, lines 19 and 20, to leave out "sanitary authority," in order to insert "local managers." This Amendment raises pretty nearly the same question as that of the hon. Member, its object being to give the local managers the power of drawing up and altering regulations, instead of leaving the matter in the hands of the Sanitary Authority. For my own part, I am very much in favour of letting elected local managers have the power of framing their own regulations, subject, of course, to the control of the Local Government Board. If this is a convenient time to raise the question, I should like to do so. The local board to be appointed under this Act will be a thoroughly representative body, and would be, I think, the authority which should be entrusted with the framing of regulations, subject, as I say, to the authority of the Local Government Board, who, I trust, will frame model regulations according to the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, lines 19 and 20, to leave out "sanitary authority," in order to insert the words "local managers."—(*Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): This really is the question. We had a conversation about it a few moments ago, when I said that in our view it would be unfortunate if the framing of the regulations were left in the hands of the various local managers in the districts. If we did leave the powers in the hands of the various Local Authorities, we should have different regulations in one parish from those we should have in an adjoining parish. [*Interruption.*] The hon. Gentleman points out that the local bodies would be subject to the Local Government Board; but, even if so, scope would be left for considerable difference in adjoining parishes. Subject to the approval of the Local Government Board, there might be awkward differences of view on many matters as between one parish and the other. I consider the authority who should be the governing authority in this matter should be the authority responsible to the ratepayers. It is not at all to be wondered at that the Local Government Board, looking at the responsibility of the Sanitary Authority in that way, has placed upon their shoulders the duty of drawing up bye-laws or regulations which extend throughout the districts. I do not think the matter is one of very great importance, though I can conceive that if those regulations are drawn up in small parishes where there are a great many local influences to be brought to bear on the matter, not in the public interest, but in the interest of individuals, it would be a very bad thing. I can assure the hon. Gentleman who moves the Amendment that the Government are quite as desirous as he can be that all the rules and regulations under this Bill, and all the clauses of this Bill, shall be drawn up in such a way as will give the best guarantee for the working of the measure. And we think we shall secure that better by placing the authority we are now speaking of in the hands of the municipal body, rather than the body elected by the parish.

MR. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.): I wish to point out that the Committee should bear in mind the difficulty which is likely to arise in regard to correspondence. In all probability the clerk to the Sanitary Authority will have more correspondence in connection with those allotments with the Local Government Board, and with other people, than he can conveniently dispose of. Everyone who is acquainted with municipal work knows what difficulty arises in regard to this question of correspondence. This matter must be borne in mind in deciding the question now before the Committee.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to move to leave out, in line 22, the words "and management."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I accept it.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 22, to leave out the words "and management."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

MR. CHANNING: I now beg to move to leave out from lines 22 and 23 the words "and for preventing any undue preference in the letting thereof." I hope this Amendment will be accepted. It does not seem to me desirable that the choice of the allotment tenants should be left in any way to the Sanitary Authority. If we have allotment wardens, or boards, or whatever term we may adopt to define them, it is obvious that the personal relations of the allotment holders will be with that body, and not with the Sanitary Authority. One of the most effective charges made by Lord Salisbury in his speech at Newport in 1885, was that just this power of selection of the tenants would be a means of corruption and improper influence, would be, as he said, made the Budget of the caucus. I think it would be consistent with the object we have in view to adopt this Amendment, as it would give the allotment tenants greater freedom and a greater sense of independence if they had to deal not with the Sanitary Authority but with their own freely elected allotment managers who directly represented them.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, lines 22 and 23, to leave out the words "and for preventing any undue preference in the letting thereof."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am afraid we cannot accept this Amendment of the hon. Gentleman. The Sanitary Authorities are called upon to make regulations if they think fit, with regard to undue preference, and I think it is very desirable that any question arising in this way should not be fought out on a small area. I take it that there are certain general principles which will be laid down in the regulations to prevent undue preference—to specify the persons eligible for allotments, and so on—and those regulations, I imagine, will be submitted to the Local Government Board. I shall propose to draw up, in response to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain), model bye-laws and regulations, and one of the regulations undoubtedly will have to be some method of properly working these allotments—they will have to have reference to the business of the managers, and they would also have to prevent undue preference that may very well be expected to exist in small localities.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): I am glad the Government oppose this Amendment, which I think would have a most mischievous effect. All will agree that, under the circumstances which exist in rural districts especially, it is of essential importance that allotment holders should have confidence in those who manage these matters, and that, above all, the regulations should be laid down by some authority to prevent undue preference which otherwise will undoubtedly be established even where it does not now exist. If we are agreed that regulations should be made for this purpose, can anything be more absurd than that we should have two sets of regulations laid down by different authorities—one by the Sanitary Authority as to the letting of allotments, and another to prevent under preference by the local wardens. This would lead to great confusion, and if the hon. Gentleman will consider the matter for a moment he will see that it would not be practicable.

MR. CHANNING: As to the reasonableness of my contention I would point out that what really I have in view in my Amendment is that the Sanitary Authority is responsible for everything which may affect the rates. What we desire is that the purchase of the land and all the money matters should be left to the Sanitary Authority to arrange, but that the management of the allotment fields, and the personal arrangements with the tenants should be left to the allotment Managers a board directly elected on the one man one vote principle. As I understand that the Local Government Board will draw up model regulations, and that the regulations will in all cases be submitted to the Local Government Board, I shall not press my Amendment.

MR. RITCHIE: The Local Government Board already issue model bye-laws. It is desirable that the bye-laws should be as much as possible on one model; but we do not withdraw the question of laying down the regulations from the Local Authorities.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg leave to move my other Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 25 and 26, to leave out the words "persons eligible to be tenants of such allotments and the."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock): I wish at this stage to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board a question as to title of this Bill. The word "labourers" has caused some misconception in regard to it out of doors, although it has been well understood here that the measure was not to be limited to agricultural labourers exclusively. In order to make this clear, I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would consent on Report to omit the word "labourers" from the title?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I must confess I do not know how this word got into the Bill, as it is not by any means our intention that the Bill should be restricted to agricultural labourers. We desire that the word should apply to residents in towns, and we believe it will be as beneficial to them equally as to labourers in the country districts. I will take care that that will be made plain, and that this word shall be removed.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne); The object of the Amendment I understand is to deprive the Sanitary Authority of the power of defining the persons eligible for allotments. Would it not be better that we should know who we are legislating for? It would be much better that this House should, before the passing of the Bill, lay down clearly the classes of persons who are to be eligible. We should have some definition of the term labourer, or whatever term may be adopted by the right hon. Gentleman.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I would advise the Committee not to accept this Amendment.

MR. CHANNING: On the ground that the regulations have to pass the Local Government Board I shall not press it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I beg to move, in page 3, line 26, to leave out from "and" to "allotments" in line 27. The effect of that would be to omit the words, "and the notices to be given for the letting thereof, and the size of the allotments." It seems to me that the clauses of the Bill fully deal with the size of allotments.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 26, to leave out from the word "and," to the word "allotments" in line 27.—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): What I understand the hon. Member to mean is, that the regulations will lay down the size of the allotments. Is that so?

MR. COBB: What I point out is, that the Bill itself proposes to lay down the size of the allotments.

MR. RITCHIE: It is true that the Bill states the maximum size of an allotment; but there is considerable scope between an acre, and the size of some allotments. It is not at all desirable that there should be a hard-and-fast line drawn in the matter, so long as the allotments are within an acre. Within that maximum it should be left to the circumstances of the district, and the discretion of the authorities to decide what would be the extent of the allotments.

MR. COBB: What kind of regulations would be made as to size?

MR. RITCHIE: I really do not feel called upon to define the size; but I will tell the hon. Member what is in my mind. The Sanitary Authority might have reason to believe that there was a demand in a particular place for a certain number of allotments, and they might seem to provide what seemed to them a sufficient amount of land to meet the wants of the district. The Sanitary Authority might say—"We will provide land for a certain number of allotments," and they might divide the land up into lots of half an acre, or a quarter of an acre. But the Government propose that, in addition to being able to do this, the local managers, where they have reason to believe that it will be desirable to give more than a half or a quarter of an acre, may have power to put two or three allotments together, so as to give a person a larger allotment, provided it does not exceed, on the whole, one acre.

MR. CHANNING: It is desirable that we should understand this matter more clearly. The Government seem to be receding step by step from their original proposal. It seems to me that if you want to give allotments to people who require them, the simplest way would be to go to the field, which is to be cut up into allotments, and see what the character of it is—they should go to the land, and deal with the matter practically, and determine the size of the allotments, according to position, and to the nature of the soil in different parts of the estate. Your local Boards of Guardians would not have time to carry out this work of investigations; and I think that this is one of the points which should be left to the allotment wardens. It is just the work which should be left to practical men to do.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I do not think it is worth while to spend the time of the Committee upon this Amendment, as the general provisions relating to allotments would cover this point It is evident that a labourer with a large family of grown-up lads should get an acre from whoever has the granting of the allotments, whereas a man who has no children, or very few, or very small children, would be satisfied with half an acre, or a quarter of an acre. I do not think my hon. Friend need press the Amendment, as it is covered by the general provisions expressed by the Bill.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): It is not a matter of importance; but I would ask the Government to accept this Amendment. You may have a clashing of authority between the Sanitary Authority and the local boards or wardens. In one particular parish the people may desire to have large allotments, and they may be granted to them; but in another parish a hard-and-fast rule may be laid down that no allotment shall exceed a quarter of an acre.

MR. COBB: My reason for wishing to leave those words out is exactly what my hon. Friend has described. It is said that different people may want different sized allotments; but if you have fixed regulations applying to everybody in the parish, your provision dealing with size will be inapplicable.

MR. RITCHIE: The land for allotments must be obtained by the Sanitary Authority under some kind of system. I do not think it is right or fair to take a piece of land, and then say to the local managers, "We give you full power to cut this land up in any way you please." I quite concur that there must be considerable margin left for the Local Authorities outside the regulations made by the Sanitary Authorities. The Sanitary Authority may say that the land shall be cut up into half or quarter-acre allotments, and the local managers, within the limits of the Bill, will be able to say how many of these plots shall be given.

MR. COBB: In my view, what the Sanitary Authority should do would be to find out, before they buy the land, the quantity which would be required. I do not wish to press the Amendment to a Division, but I did desire to explain my view on the matter to the Committee.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: These are only enabling words—then why not leave them out?

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): It appears to me that the same question we are endeavouring to deal with will arise again further on. The point at issue is as to whether all these regulations should be laid down by the Sanitary Authority, extending over a large area—extending over every parish in that area—or whether you should leave the regulations to local managers? It seems to me the best thing you could do would be to give general powers to the Sanitary Authority, but to leave all the details of management to the Local Authority, leaving to the latter the settlement of such question as the size of allotments. They will be the best Local Authority, and will know the wishes of the population and the characteristics of the district much better than the Sanitary Authority, whose jurisdiction may extend over a large district, and who may be too busy with other matters to go into these points of detail. That is the real issue; and I put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether, to avoid the clashing of those authorities, it would not be better to leave out some of these words, and leave something to the discretion of the allotment wardens. The right hon. Gentleman says it is necessary to have some system; but I do not see how that would be interfered with by giving a certain amount of discretion, with regard to those regulations, to the allotment wardens. The Sanitary Authority, when applications are made to them for allotments, will consider the general sense and desire as to the number of allotments required, and will be able to frame a general scheme, but would not be so well able as the other authority to go into points of minor details as to whether a certain man shall have half an acre, or a quarter of an acre, or an acre.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I wish to move an Amendment of which I have given private Notice.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Amendment, I think, will come in better in the next clause.

MR. COBB: I think, Sir, you must have passed over other Amendments.

THE CHAIRMAN: This is an Amendment in manuscript.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: The Amendment I wish to move will come in, in line 27, after the word "allotments." I wish to add, "not exceeding three acres of pasture, and one acre of arable land." This seems to me to be a very important Amendment which we shall certainly have to discuss. I will not detain the Committee for any length of time on this question, because it was thoroughly threshed out on the second reading. The object of the Amendment is to enable allotments of three acres of pasture land to be given to those who desire them, without interfering with the provision to allow one acre of arable land. I believe everybody has made up his mind either for or against this proposal; but I hope the Government, if they have not quite decided, will accept my proposal, because, whilst thankful to them for the Amendment which they have proposed, giving cow runs, that is to say, common lands, the Bill will be ineffective, especially in certain districts of the West and the North, if labourers are not allowed to have three acres of pasture land, which, so far as the Amendment is concerned, is equivalent, or less than equivalent, to one acre of arable land. If the Amendment is accepted, then the Bill will be of extra value, valuable as it is already, because it will apply not only to the labourer, but to the villager—that class of population which those who are acquainted with villages know are to be found there, such as hay tyers, hauliers, road makers, and so on; people who may have a small amount of capital, and plenty of leisure. I have in my mind, also, such people as the village shopkeeper, who has very little to do except on market days. There may be only a very small number of people to whom this Amendment will apply; there will, perhaps, not be many of those whom it is sought to assist by this Bill, who will be able to keep a cow, and who will desire to have three acres of pasture. It is absurd to suppose that if we give this power, everyone is going to rush in for three acres of land. Nothing of the kind. Only a few in a locality will be likely to avail themselves of it. I contend that it will be a great incitement to thrift, and I believe that there will be a sufficient number of people to avail themselves of these powers to get over that terrible want—namely, the want of a proper supply of milk. I am sure that this proposal will solve the difficulty. There will be one or two, or three or four persons in a parish who will apply for three acres to enable them to keep a cow.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not out of Order in moving this Amendment here; but I think it would be more convenient if he moved it on Sub-section 30, Clause 6. All he proposes to do is to fix the maximum limit.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: I think the Amendment would come in quite as well here. It is a direct instruction on the matter. It would be better to insert the Amendment here, while we are dealing with the size of allotments.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will see that his Amendment is really cutting down the power of the authority who may, according to the Bill, so far as we have gone, grant even five or six acres. His Amendment is not of an enlarging nature, but quite the reverse.

Mr. COBB: I would also appeal to the hon. Member to put this Amendment in a different place.

The CHAIRMAN: Is it the pleasure of the Committee that this Amendment be withdrawn?

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: No, Sir; I thing this is the best place to put the Amendment in, and I therefore move it.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 27, after "allotments," to insert the words "not exceeding three acres of pasture and one acre of arable land."—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. CHANNING: It really seems most undesirable to go outside the ordinary structure of the Bill. In the 6th clause we have provisions as to the statutory conditions on which allotments are to be let. It is obvious that it would be more convenient to take this discussion upon that clause.

Mr. COBB: I should like to ask you a question, Sir, upon a point of Order. If this Amendment is put, it will obviously preclude me from moving an Amendment I have down upon the Paper, and which I think is of great importance. I handed it in this morning. It is to the effect that the allotments shall be of such size that the Sanitary Authority, after taking into consideration the nature of the soil, and the employment and circumstances of the applicant and his family, shall determine.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): On the point of Order, Sir, I shall like to say I desire to move an Amendment limiting the size of the allotments to half-an-acre. If this

Amendment is conceded, I presume I shall have no opportunity of moving my Amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: Clearly, if the Committee decides upon three acres, the right hon. Gentleman will not be able to move his Amendment limiting the size of the allotments to half an acre.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Government regard this as a very important question; in fact, as the only important question of principle which remains to be settled. This may possibly be an inconvenient place to raise the Amendment; but the view of the Government is this—that the sooner we get the discussion over the better. There is one additional advantage to my mind in taking the discussion now, and it is that it will dispose of a great many other Amendments. That is an advantage of which I am very sensible. I need hardly say that the Government entirely sympathize with the object the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) has in view in proposing this Amendment. I take it there is no difference between him and us in reference to the acre of arable land, that is, the size to which the Government propose to adhere. The real point is whether the authorities shall have the power to give one acre of arable land or three acres of pasture land. In our view, when the allotment amounts to three acres of land, it assumes very much the aspect of a small holding, and in the opinion of the Government, that is rather outside the four corners of the Bill. The Bill proposes to provide for the labouring man something upon which he will be able to expend the capital which he possesses, and which, as a rule, in his surplus labour. We believe that with half-an-acre, or, in some cases, an acre of arable land, there is no reason to suppose that the labouring man will not be able, in his surplus time, to so cultivate the land as to confer upon himself a very large and valuable benefit. It must be seen that the only necessity in the case of an acre or less of arable land is, that the man and his family should have labour to devote to the cultivation of the allotment. But, when you come to the question of three acres of grass land, two matters of difficulty arise. First of all, I can easily conceive that in those very places where allotments are most required, according to the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division (Mr. Jesse Collings)—that is to say, where milk is scarce, and that I presume is in non-grazing counties. [Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: No, no!] The hon. Gentleman says "No, no!" and I will withdraw the remark, although I still retain my opinion. I should have thought, but I am subject to the correction of the hon. Gentleman, who has paid a great deal of attention to this matter. I should have thought that in those places in which there was a scarcity of milk—namely, in arable counties, it would have been almost impossible to obtain the land to provide three acres if there was much demand. But even if that were not so, it is clear that the allotment holder's labour is not the only capital he requires upon three acres. The plot would be of no use to him, unless he were able to put a cow upon it, and that entails a considerable amount of capital, more capital than I should say it is at all likely that nine-tenths of the labourers have. I know of many parts of England in which pasture allotments are extremely successful; Lord Tollemache has provided a large number of grass allotments on his estate in Cheshire, but, according to my information, everyone of these allotments has a cottage attached to it. The allotments on Lord Tollemache's estate are very successful, but I imagine that a very large amount of the success that has attended the allotments is due to the fact that they are attached to cottages. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jesse Collings) has said that the Government propose an alternative scheme, which is not without value. We have been unable to persuade ourselves that it would be a wise or a practical thing to allow the Sanitary Authority under this Bill to provide three acres of pasture if applied for; but we do what we consider is the next best thing. We propose to allow Local Authorities to provide land for common pasture, and in that I believe we are going back to the ancient custom of providing for the inhabitants of villages a common pasture for their cows. Now, we believe that the right of a man who has a cow to put his cow on a common pasture during the grazing season will be of considerable benefit to him, but I am afraid that further than that we cannot go. I may point out to the hon. Gentleman that there is nothing whatever in the Bill, so far as I can understand it, which will prevent a labourer having an allotment of arable land, and being also able to put a cow to graze upon the common pasture. Nothing at all, so that it may very probably be that a labourer who has an arable allotment may also keep a cow. I am afraid that, however willing I feel personally to do all I can to meet the undoubted want which exists, and which the hon. Gentleman has done so much to supply, I cannot consent to the Motion of the hon. Gentleman empowering Local Authorities to provide pasture allotments, which will require capital not only for stock but for the fencing of the land, and this would render the Bill practically inoperative, and might lead to very considerable difficulty. We have done all we can to enable Local Authorities to provide common pasture, and I hope that our efforts will receive the approval of the Committee.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): The Amendment which has been raised by my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) raises two questions, the one a question of procedure, and the other a question as to the merits of the Bill. With regard to the question of procedure, I am sure we shall all be inclined to pay great respect to your authority, Sir; and I understand you are of opinion that it would be more convenient to take this discussion on a subsequent clause. But, at the same time, I may point out to you that the inconvenience is entirely due to the action of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Eastern Division of Northampton (Mr. Channing), because what is the state of the case? The facts are rather interesting, and I think the Committee should be made aware of them. Everyone knows that my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division has taken exceptional interest in this subject, especially with reference to the desirability of providing in rural districts facilities for labourers and others to obtain three acres of pasture land. So much is that the case, that it has almost become the soubriquet of the hon. Member that he is the Member for "three acres and a cow." Under those circumstances, it will not surprise the Committee to learn that the moment this Bill passed the second reading my hon. Friend put down on the Paper an Amendment which, if accepted, would have given to the labourer an opportunity of obtaining three acres and a cow. This Amendment my hon. Friend proposed to insert at the end of the sub-section. Thereupon, the hon. Member for the Eastern Division of Northampton (Mr. Channing), desiring to anticipate my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division put down subsequently an Amendment upon an earlier portion of the clause, which proposed to omit the sub-section, and to come in with exactly the same words as my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division. So that the hon. Member for the Eastern Division of Northampton, in fact, says to my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham "*sic vos non vobis*," and, like the cuckoo, proposes to oust the hon. Member from the nest he has made his own. I really cannot be surprised, under these circumstances, if my hon. Friend persists with his present Amendment, if he endeavours, in fact, to reinstate himself in what I may call his political possession, although I cannot at all sympathize with the disappointment of the hon. Member for the Eastern Division of Northampton (Mr. Channing). Now I come to the merits of the proposal. I must say I support most strongly the proposition of my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division, and I regret exceedingly that the Government do not see their way to accept it. I think that, by rejecting it, they are doing much to lessen the value which would otherwise attach to this Bill, and I cannot say that the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) are at all convincing to my mind upon this subject. The right hon. Gentleman has told us, and I for one desire to express my gratitude to the Government for what they have done, that he has provided in this Bill, or proposes to provide by Amendments he has put upon the Paper, for giving the labourers a commonable right of pasture which, he says, is in some sort of way an alternative to the proposal of my hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings).

But does not the right hon. Gentleman see that, if he thinks there are grounds for providing this alternative, he cuts from under his feet almost all the objections which he has taken to the proposal of my hon. Friend? If, as he says, it will be in many districts impossible to obtain land for the purpose of giving three acres of pasture to the labourer, still more will it be impossible to obtain land for the purpose of providing commonable rights of pasture. If it is true, as he says, and I dare say it is true, that in many cases a labourer would be unable to find the capital which would be necessary to provide a cow for three acres of pasture, the argument applies to the case of the cow placed on the commonable pasture as much as to the case of the cow placed on the three acres. Consequently, the objections which the right hon. Gentleman has taken, if they are really valid, apply equally to the alternative proposal; but, Sir, are they valid? The right hon. Gentleman says that there would be difficulty in obtaining in some cases the necessary land. Well, of course, if that difficulty amounts to this, that land cannot be obtained at a reasonable price, the Local Authority has full discretion and will not be called upon to provide it. All we ask is that the Local Authority shall have power to provide allotments where the land exists. [An hon. MEMBER: Compulsory?] Certainly; but I do not know what the object of the interruption is. It does not in the least touch the objection made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie). The right hon. Gentleman told us that the Local Authorities would not be able to obtain land at a reasonable rent in certain cases. In such an event, there would be no compulsion upon them to take the land, nobody would expect them to do so. In a vast number of cases, however, there is no doubt Local Authorities could easily obtain pasture land for the purpose of of allotments, and all we ask is that in such cases, and where a demand is proved to exist, they should have this right given to them. Well, then the right hon. Gentleman says that in many cases the labourers would not have the necessary capital. I have talked to many labourers on this subject, and they have always said to me—"It is true a great number of us may not have capital, and probably never shall; but others of us have either a little money in the bank, or we have friends who will advance us the necessary funds, and therefore we could at once put a cow on the land if we had it." I know many cases in which labourers, who now enjoy the possession of allotments—thanks to the voluntary concessions which have been made to them by landlords—have begun perhaps with some poultry and a pig, then they have got a calf, and in the due course of nature that calf has become a cow. I am quite certain that in this, as in so many other cases, where there is a will there is a way; where these people have a desire for this facility they will find the means of acquiring it. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) has referred to the case of Lord Tollemache's estate. I can see that illustration has created a great impression upon his mind, because there is no doubt that Lord Tollemache's experiments is the most successful, and most striking experiment which has hitherto been made in reference to allotments in the United Kingdom. Lord Tollemache has some hundreds of labourers who enjoy the facility which my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division desires that labourers in other parts of the country should enjoy equally. I think that in pasture districts like Devonshire, parts of Wiltshire, and many other counties I could name, facilities of this kind would be experimentally adopted. I believe it would be of great advantage to the labourer and his family. Certainly, I shall vote with my hon. Friend, and I very much regret that the Government have not seen their way to adopt the Amendment.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I heartily agree with all the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) has said, except with his reference to myself which, I think, was somewhat ill-timed, and occupied unnecessarily some time of the Committee, which might have been given to more practical purpose. But as the right hon. Gentleman has taken this course, I will, with the permission of the Committee, say one word in reply to the pointed personal attack of the right hon. Gentleman, and will state exactly what has occurred. Let me point out the fact of which the right hon. Gentleman is no doubt aware, that the whole body of the Liberal County Members—who are really more concerned in this matter than anybody else—met, and went into the subject as soon as the Bill was printed. They appointed a Committee to draw Amendments on certain lines—and these Amendments were brought before the General Body at a subsequent meeting and approved—which were to be brought before this Committee. The principle which is embodied in my Amendment we considered a very good one, and we had no idea that the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) would in the least quarrel with us for agreeing to propose it for adoption by this Committee. It was in pursuance of this discussion that I put this Amendment with others upon the Paper. It is not my fault that it found its way there before the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division.

MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN: It was put down after my hon. Friend's Amendment had been placed upon the Paper.

MR. CHANNING: It was not put down afterwards. I give that statement my most emphatic contradiction. The whole of my Amendments had been drawn up, and were handed to the Clerk at the Table directly after the second reading was agreed to. Those Amendments included this one which, of course, we thought would be heartily supported by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jesse Collings). As the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. J. Chamberlain) has charged me with borrowing Amendments from other people, I should like to ask how it is that, when it was perfectly well known through the Press that the Liberal County Members' Committee had decided upon an Amendment embodying a popular initiative to compel the Local Authority to act, although that principle was not embodied in the Bill of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings), that hon. Gentleman put down an Amendment to give a popular initiative in anticipation? [*Cries of* "Order, order!"] I will not pursue that point further. With regard to the main question, let me say that the arguments of my right hon. Friend the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) must seem to be absolutely sound to anyone acquainted with the working of the small allotment system. Let me point out to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie), that a great many of these grass allotments in Derbyshire have no buildings upon them, except perhaps a small shed, and that the people using them live in the neighbouring town and villages. I do not feel the least hostility to the proposal of the Government in regard to common pasture which the Committee will know was first made by the noble Lord the Member for Hampshire; I think it is a very good one, but it is desirable that power should be given to Local Authorities to provide grass allotments also. On the allotments' estate adjoining one of the towns I represent, part of the allotment farm is specially allotted in grass allotments to tenants and members of the association who occupy the farm.

MR. RADCLIFFE COOKE (Newington, W.): The difference between the Government and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division (Mr. Jesse Collings) is very simple. We all desire the same thing. We all desire that the labourer should have a cow, and that that cow should produce milk for him and his family. My opinion is this, that it will be much more convenient and much less expensive for labourers to run their cows on one piece of pasture, than for each labourer to have a single cow on a separate plot of three acres in extent; because each piece of pasture land must be fenced round, and each cow must be kept separate in each plot of three acres, and a cow does not care about being separated but always wants to get to the cows in the next plot. Suppose you take a pasture field of 18 acres in extent, and divide it into these plots of three acres each; you would have nearly a mile of fencing to keep up, and no agricultural labourer would have the time, much less the material, to keep the fencing in repair. There is one other reason why there is not so much pasture land in this country as there otherwise would be. I should like to lay down some of my arable fields into pasture, but I cannot do so because I get no water for the land. I think the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) is aware that calves grow into cows, he may not possibly be aware that a cow will not produce milk unless you give it water to drink; and it is scarcely possible, in fact it is impossible, that upon each three acre plot of pasture there can be water for a cow to drink. Therefore, so far as my practical experience goes—and I am a farmer myself—I think it would be more convenient to the labourer for us to adopt the suggestion of the Government instead of that made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division (Mr. Jesse Collings). I quite agree that it is extremely desirable to provide small holdings for labourers, and when that question comes before Parliament, whether it is brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham or by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division, I shall be disposed to support it. I shall not only like to see holdings of three acres in extent, but of 10, 20, 30, and 40 acres, so that we might enable labourers and small traders to rise from that particular condition in life in which they now are, to a more superior one.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Derby): Sir, I will not enter into the discussion as to who is to have the credit of this Amendment. If my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings), my first leader in this matter, gets posession of the field I shall vote with him, if anyone else gets possession of the field I shall vote with him. Now, we have had the farmer experiences of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for West Newington (Mr. Radcliffe Cooke), and they seem to me to be rather singular. It so happens I have been fortunate enough to live all my life in districts both in Yorkshire and in Hampshire where these small holdings exist, and therefore I am perfectly acquainted with the conditions in respect to them. I have said before in this House, that as a boy, I knew perfectly well that cottagers used to have plots of two or three acres, and that they never had any difficulty whatever in having their cow. I appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down. He says there is to be a commonable pasture. What is the cow going to be fed on in the winter? Everybody knows that a man who keeps a cow must have hay to feed it upon in the winter months; where is that hay to come from? If a small farmer or peasant has three acres of pasture land, he shuts off half of it for hay and gets his little stock of hay for the winter. It is well known that the small pasture allotments are the best grass land in the whole parish, because there is more manure put on them, and there is more stock kept upon them per acre than upon the large farms; I have seen on these little plots the best grass fields in the whole parish. Often on three acres there will be a cow and its followers, and sometimes more than one cow, and that is a stock which no large farmer keeps per acre upon his land. I entirely agree with the proposal of the Government that there should be commonable pasture; it is a common thing in Yorkshire for labourers to turn out their cows in the summer months upon the parishings; they thus relieve their little plots of land for the time and are able to get hay off them. I gladly accept the proposal of the Government, though not as a substitute for the three acre plots. It is not always certain, however, that commonable land is a good thing. If there is any cattle disease about it is not wise to turn cows upon land where other cows are running. I know many people who do not like to take advantage of turning their cattle into the New Forest, in consequence of the fear of their being attacked by disease; therefore the proposal of the Government cannot be regarded in any degree as a substitute for pasture allotments. I was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) say that in pasture counties it was easy to get milk. Anyone who has experience in the matter knows that these are the very places where you cannot get milk. A man gets very jealous of his milk when he is in the habit of turning it into butter or of using it for other purposes, and while it is one of the commodities of the district he will not part with it at any price. I attach immense importance to this Amendment for other reasons. No one can know the working classes without feeling that one of the great disadvantages they have in this country is that if they make a little money they do not know what to do with it. It is worse here than it is in France, or in any other country. In France there is a great habit of investing money in the Public Funds and in other securities which do not exist here. One way in which artizans invest their money here—in many country towns, at all events—is in building houses. This encourages them to save for that purpose. I maintain that every encouragement to thrift ought to be held out to the agricultural labourers. How many people think there is a difficulty about labourers getting cows. There is, practically, not the difficulty which many people imagine. I have known hundreds of cases where labourers have had their cows. It is asked what happens to a man if he loses his cow? It is the habit in many parishes with which I am familiar for men to subscribe to a cow club, and if any misfortune happens to a cow of a member of the club he is recouped his loss. There is not the smallest doubt that with ordinary good fortune a man may make 7*s*. or 8*s*. per week out of his cow, besides paying a fair rent for his land. He can perfectly well afford to pay £2 an acre, or even more, for his grass land, and will have a moderate profit. He has the skim milk for the family and also for the pig which he has, and at the end of the year he has often a little money besides as the result of the working of his allotment. I am perfectly convinced, from practical experience, that the allotment system is one of the best methods by which we can improve the condition of the agricultural labourer, and therefore I hope the Government will reconsider their determination in this matter. I cannot see what objection there can be to giving discretion to Local Authorities to supply allotments as they have been supplied in innumerable cases of which I am perfectly cognizant. If there is any grass land which the authorities want for allotments, why not give them power to acquire it? There is another consideration which, I think, recommends the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham. None of us desire that these allotments should displace the ordinary labour of the land. Well, observe that pasture land requires less labour of a man than by a spade allotment. A spade allotment must take up a great deal of a man's time. In these long days when a man knocks off work at 5 o'clock he has time to work on his spade allotment; but when the days become short the whole of his time must be occupied in his ordinary labour. But in the case of grass land there is no labour required except in gathering in the hay, in which a labourer would be assisted by his neighbours. During the rest of the year there is, practically, no great call upon his labour. His wife can attend to the cows when they are brought up for milking, and in the winter only a short time is required for feeding the cows in the shed, which may be done after dark. Therefore, if your desire is—and I am quite sure the desire of everybody is—not to interfere with the time of the labourer, and therefore not to do injustice to the farmer, I think it is well that we should encourage pasture rather than tillage upon these small holdings. That has certainly been my practical experience. I have very often seen that a man cannot find time to attend to an arable allotment, but that, with the assistance of his wife and children, he can successfully hold a pasture allotment. A pasture allotment gives the labourer that which is the most valuable of all commodities which can be given to the families of the labouring poor, and that is milk. Everybody who knows the North Country—everybody who knows Scotland — knows that though a man has the advantage of running his cattle on the hills he is obliged to have his little farm. It is there that we get the best milk we can find in the world. You have got there a stray on the hills; but that is of no good by itself. A man has a little plot in which to enclose his beast. Surely, it is well that the Government should not shut the door to the practical proposal of my hon. Friend (Mr. Jesse Collings). If pasture allotments cannot be granted they will not be granted; but why should you not enable them to be provided under circumstances where they can be provided, and where they can be provided for the benefit of the labourers? I shall certainly support the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

Mr. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I cannot help thinking there is some inconvenience in discussing this Amendment at the present moment. Everybody will agree that when we come to a consideration so important as this—namely, what is to be the price of the allotments—the question ought to be decided by the Statute itself, and not by the regulations of the Local Authorities. There is another inconvenience also in discussing this Amendment. The Amendment is divided into two parts. One part deals with the question of three acres of pasture, and the other provides that there is to be one acre of arable land. I wish, before this discussion closes, for an opportunity to be afforded me of submitting to the Committee some of the views I entertain. I hope I shall be able to show, however unpopular the view may be, that it would be a better and more business-like way of dealing with this question to limit the maximum in ordinary cases to half an acre instead of one acre. I am anxious to say a few words on this subject, although I confess, after the observations of the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Northampton (Mr. Channing), I have great diffidence in doing so. The hon. Member has informed us that the Liberal County Members—that is to say, himself and a little clique who act with him—have a great deal more to do with this matter than anyone else in the House. We have been favoured with the hon. Gentleman's presence in this House for about a year, and I must say that, under these circumstances, his suggestion is about as cool if not impertinent a one as can be imagined. I do not doubt the hon. Gentleman provides allotments for the people who live around him, and that he has great practical experience in the matter; but he is not the only person who has experience in the matter, and I think it is rather hard if Members on the Conservative side of the House are not to be allowed to express their views. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) expressed the hope that the Government will not close the door upon this question. Now, I do not think that is quite a fair observation with regard to the attitude of the Government, because since the Bill was laid on the Table of the House they have introduced Amendments which, in their opinion, will go a long way to meet the views of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham upon the question of pasture land for labourers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby says there will be great difficulties attaching to the proposal of the Government to provide commonable pasture. He says, where is the hay to be grown for the winter? How are the cows to be kept during that part of the year? Surely the right hon. Gentleman should know there is nothing new in this proposition. It is practised in many parts of England already. I do not think I know a single parish where there is not what is called a cow run or a cow gate —cow gate is the expression in my county. When commons were ploughed up grass land was provided as a substitute, and they are the cow gates and cow runs in which each cottager has a right to run a cow. Cottagers provide their own hay, and their own accommodation for the cow. The present practice answers remarkably well, and I do think that, under these circumstances, it is rather hard to accuse the Government of trying to shut the door to the adoption of this proposal.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I did not accuse the Government at all. I am extremely glad they have made their proposal; but I think it ought to be supplementary to that of my hon. Friend the Member for the Bordesley Division. I do not underrate the value of their proposal.

Mr. CHAPLIN: The right hon. Gentleman certainly appealed to the Government not to shut the door to this question. I am endeavouring to show that the Government have tried to provide a substitute, and, as I think, a substitute which would be more workable than the proposition of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division. The real difficulty appears to consist in this—that this Amendment raises the whole question between allotments on the one hand and a system of small holdings on the other. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, but I think it does. It is impossible to deny that three acres of pasture *plus* one acre of arable land does constitute a small holding and ceases altogether to be an allotment. Of course, I cannot expect that hon. Members who are in favour of providing small holdings by compulsion at the cost of the rates—and that is a proposition entertained by many hon. Gentlemen in this House—I cannot suppose for a moment that they will agree with me in my view of this question. I have never yet been able to see my way to adopt that proposal, and I confess I do not see it at the present time, and that will be my reason for opposing the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham. In the case of an arable allotment, pure and simple, all the capital that is required is the labour of the man who holds it. The case is totally different when you come to deal with pasture allotments. Then you are confronted with all kinds of difficulties at once. There are the questions of capital, of buildings, of repairs, and you convert the Local Authority at once into a landlord with all the responsibilities of a landlord. Who is to manage these estates? You will require an agent; indeed, the system will be liable to every kind of jobbing it is possible to imagine. I confess I do see the greatest possible practical difficulty in providing small holdings in great numbers for the population by compulsory powers of law, and at the expense of the ratepayers of this country. It has been pointed out that this has been done already with great ease by Lord Tollemache. I happen to know a great deal about Lord Tollemache and his estates. Lord Tollemache has two estates; he has one estate in Cheshire, and he has another in Suffolk. Cheshire is a purely grass county—at all events, the district in which he lives is a purely grass district. There the system has been adopted without difficulty, and I can quite understand that in purely grass districts it may possibly be carried out. But you are legislating not for purely grass districts, but for the whole of England, and Lord Tollemache's position illustrates the difficulty which will be found to exist. In Suffolk—which is a purely arable county—Lord Tollemache has not adopted the allotment system, and if he desired to do so he would find it impossible to carry it out. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby gets over the difficulty by saying that where there is no grass land it will not be taken; but there is no parish in England where there is no grass land. It is the large and small paddocks round the farmer's homestead that are extremely valuable to him, and without which it would be impossible for him to carry on his business or occupation with anything like success. It is the small plots of grass land—if the hon. Member's Amendment be adopted—that you are going to place it in the power of the Local Authorities to take by compulsion and at the fair market value of the land. Under these circumstances, I must say I can see the greatest possible difficulty in carrying out this proposal. But that is not all. You have to provide accommodation under the Bill for artizans in towns if they desire it, and it is not only three acres of pasture you are going to ask for power to take—the hon. and learned Member for West Newington (Mr. Radcliffe Cooke) just now said he would like to see these allotments extend to 30 and 40 acres. When I heard the hon. and learned Gentleman I could not help thinking what would be the position of a landowner owning an estate in the neighbourhood of a large and populous town if any considerable number of artizans moved the Sanitary Authority to proceed in this matter, and to provide each of them with 30 or 40 acres of land.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman is rather amplifying the discussion. The proposal is to restrict the allotment to three acres.

Mr. CHAPLIN: I beg your pardon, Sir. I was led away by the remarks of the hon. and learned Member for West Newington. But even in the case of three acres the difficulty would be very considerable in many parts of the country, as I have endeavoured to point out, and that is the reason why I must vote against the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman. In conclusion, Sir, I should like to ask you whether the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman may not be divided into two parts, and a discussion taken upon the parts separately?

The CHAIRMAN: It is competent for any hon. Member to move an Amendment to this Amendment.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): I quite agree with the right hon. Gentleman opposite in the remarks he made as to the procedure adopted in regard to this Amendment. I have an Amendment of my own dealing with the question which I should like to have an opportunity of moving. I do not think the difficulties of procedure have been at all alleviated by the course adopted by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain). The question as to who is to have priority is hardly worth the consideration of the Committee. For my part, if an Amendment is moved for the benefit of the agricultural labourers, and not merely for an electioneering purpose, I shall very gladly welcome it, no matter whether it proceeds from the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) or from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), or anybody else. Under any circumstances, Sir, I am extremely glad we have got at last to the question of three acres and a cow. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said a labourer would not be able to obtain the capital sufficient to purchase a cow. I think anybody who knows anything about allotments will be able to tell the right hon. Gentleman that that is not the case. I venture to re-echo the words used by the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham on a previous occasion—namely, that if we give a labourer three acres there is not the slightest doubt but that the cow will follow. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division took occasion to differ from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) as to the cow-runs which are proposed to be provided by the Government. Personally, I heartily welcome the Amendment which the Government has put upon the Paper. I think it will be of the greatest practical service to the labourers. At the same time, I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby that it will be found almost impossible for labourers, if they are able to obtain a cow and to send it in the cow run, to provide hay for the winter unless they have some pasture of their own. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said that the labourers were to send their cows in the cow run during the grazing season, and he added that if they had an arable allotment they would be able to keep their cow in that during the other part of the year; but I should like to know, Sir, how it is possible for a labourer to grow, on an arable allotment, anything to keep the cow during the winter? Is the cow to nourish itself with potatoes and other produce? [An hon. MEMBER: He may grow roots.] I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman that he may grow roots; but he has to grow something for his family also, and not for the cow. If he is simply to have an arable plot on which to grow food for his cow, I think it would be far better to give him at once one acre of pasture land on which he can grow hay. Then the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division said that by giving him three acres of pasture, and also an acre of arable land, you would be approaching the subject of small holdings, about which there is a great difference of opinion. I should like to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the difference between small holdings and allotments appears to rest on this—if the labourer is able to perform other work besides attending to his farm his farm becomes an allotment; but if he cannot do anything else but attend to his land it becomes a small holding. I certainly think that a labourer will be as well able to attend to three acres of pasture as to one acre of arable land, and, at the same time, faithfully discharge his duties to the farmer. The crofters of Scotland always succeed best when they have something to labour at besides their crofts. Reference has been made to the case of Lord Tollemache. The right hon. Gentleman knows quite as well as I do that Lord Tollemache only gives allotments to men who have other employment besides their allotments. I think that proves that three acres of pasture may be considered as an allotment. I have detained the Committee too long already. I do feel so strongly on this matter that I cannot give a silent vote. I trust the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division will proceed to a Division. If so, I shall certainly vote with him.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must again point out the extreme inconvenience of the way in which this question has come up; indeed, I think that the proposal is not well understood. In my opinion the Amendment would defeat the object aimed at. The proposition is to insert, after the word "allotment," the words "not exceeding three acres of pasture and one acre of arable land." It is, therefore, a restrictive proposal, and if the Committee refuse to accept it the effect will be that there will be no restriction whatever. The Committee will have decided that there shall be no restriction as to the price of the allotments, which is scarcely what is desired, I think, by those who propose the Amendment. If the Amendment is rejected the subsequent part of the Bill, restricting the allotments to one acre, must be cut out, being inconsistent with this Amendment.

MR. RITCHIE: I should regret extremely if all the discussion we have just had is to be wasted. I hope that if the discussion is resumed on another Amendment credit will be given for the speeches now made. But with reference to the particular point immediately before us, let me remind you, Sir, that this is a clause which simply deals with the managers of the allotments.

MR. CHANNING: May I be allowed to say, by way of personal explanation, that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) wholly misunderstands me? What I meant by my reference to the Liberal county Members was that county Members, on whatever side of the House they sit, are more directly concerned with this subject than borough Members, and represent those who are specially interested.

MR. COBB: Mr. Courtney, should I be in Order in moving an Amendment to the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings)? My Amendment will make the hon. Gentleman's Amendment more restrictive; it is to insert, after the word "not," in the hon. Gentleman's Amendment—

"Less than such size as the Sanitary Authority, after taking into consideration the nature of the soil and the employment and circumstances of the applicant and his family, shall determine."

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not know that it would be out of Order to move such Amendment; but it would involve us in greater inconvenience.

MR. COBB: I wish to put it to you, Sir, that if the present Amendment is disposed of in any way, I shall be precluded from moving my Amendment, in which I have taken particular interest. If I cannot move it in its proper place, I should like to move it now.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): Upon the point of Order, would it not be possible, if this Amendment is rejected, to move later on an Amendment of a similar nature, but differing in the size of the allotment?

THE CHAIRMAN: The Committee cannot negative its own conclusion; having once come to a conclusion, it cannot reconsider it.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: According to your ruling, Sir, the effect of this Amendment would be such as neither I nor my hon. Friends contemplate. I do not want to steal a march on the Government in any shape or form, neither do I want to waste the time of the Committee by a fruitless discussion. I therefore ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): The Amendment which I rise to move has for its object to prevent such things as the cultivation of the land in rotation of crops being left in the hands of the Sanitary Authority, who have, as at present constituted, no practical experience or interest in allotment culture; whereas the men to be elected as wardens will be persons who are in close touch with the labourers who cultivate the allotments. I think this Amendment should commend itself to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 28, to leave out the words "cultivated and."—(*Mr. Halley Stewart.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. RITCHIE: I do not think these words at all imply what the hon. Member supposes. I imagine that the meaning of the words is that the Sanitary Authority shall lay down certain regulations with the view of securing good and proper cultivation of the land. I hope the hon. Member will not press the point. The regulations will have to be submitted to the Local Government Board, and nothing unreasonable will be accepted by them; but it is an essential proposition that in the management and cultivation of allotments, and within certain limits, the local managers should be allowed liberty of action.

MR. HALLEY STEWART: The definition is that of the Government; it is not my own. If you are going to exclude interference in the cultivation of the land I will not press my Amendment; but I will simply point out that the suggestion is in the words of the Bill.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 28, to leave out the words "and manage."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

Question, "That those words be there left out," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, at the end of sub-section (1.), line 28, to insert the words—"Provided that all such regulations shall make provision for reasonable notice to be given to a tenant of any allotment of the determination of his tenancy."—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. RITCHIE: I promised I would accept the Amendment standing in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) with reference to the Local Government Board approving the regulations. It seems to me better that that Amendment should come in at this point, rather than at the place at which the right hon. Gentleman proposes to introduce it. The Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman provides that any regulations made under this section shall not be put in force unless and until they have been confirmed by the Local Government Board in like manner and subject to like provisions as in the case of bye-laws under the Public Health Act of 1875.

Mr. CHAPLIN: The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman will meet my views entirely.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 28, to leave out the words "be binding on all persons whomsoever," and insert "not be of any force unless and until they have been confirmed by the Local Government Board in like manner and subject to the like provisions as in the case of bye-laws under 'The Public Health Act, 1875.'"

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words proposed be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 28, after the word "them," to insert the words—"Provided that if in any case there be a larger number of qualified applicants for allotments than there are allotments of suitable size to be distributed among such applicants, the allotments shall be assigned by lot."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. RITCHIE: I would point out that we have already provided that the regulations shall lay down certain provisions with reference to undue preference; but with regard to the Amendment, I wish to say that there may be many cases in which—quite apart from the question of undue preference—some discretion should be allowed to the Local Authorities in making allotments. I do not think it would be wise to introduce a hard-and-fast line. We can all understand that it would be right to give the preference to a thrifty as against a thriftless man; and, again, there might be cases in which the circumstances of one man's family render him preferable to another who does not stand in so favourable a position—that is to say, that it might be more necessary for one man to have the allotment than another. For these reasons I do not think it proper to bind the authorities down in the manner proposed by the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: If the hon. Member for East Northampton (Mr. Channing) will consider a little further, I think he will perceive that the effect of his Amendment will be to restrict the operation of the Bill. We have already decided that every qualified applicant shall be provided for; but this Amendment presumes that there are a number of qualified applicants for whom land cannot be got.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. CHANNING: In moving the Amendment next upon the Paper in my name, I propose to leave out the words "and in every parish of every rural sanitary district," which are now contained in it. The object is to provide that country towns and districts which are under urban Sanitary Authorities should have the same privilege of electing local managers to deal with the allotments that the Government themselves propose to give in regard to the management of allotments in rural sanitary districts. The position of many country towns and of rural districts in this

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matter are practically identical; and hon. Members will recollect that the Local Boards are not elected on "the one man one vote principle, but by the plural vote, and on a property qualification, so that they practically stand upon the same footing as the Guardians. It follows, therefore, that the same argument applies to the Local Authorities in the one case as the other; and I am quite sure that many hon. Members know that the requirements of the artizans in the two districts are identical.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 35, leave out sub-section (3) and insert,—"In every urban sanitary district, not being a municipal borough, where the provisions of this Act are carried into effect, within two months after the completion of the purchase or hiring of land by the sanitary authority for letting in allotments, an allotments management committee, the number of which shall be fixed by the sanitary authority, and which shall serve for a term of three years, shall be elected under such regulations as the Local Government Board shall from time to time issue for that purpose: Provided always, that the election of such allotments management committee shall be by ballot, that all ratepayers of such district or parish be entitled to vote at such election, or to be eligible to be nominated as candidates for the allotments management committee, and that, in voting at such election, no ratepayer shall give more than one vote to any candidate, nor give more votes than the number to be elected."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE: The only point to be considered on this Amendment is whether, in the local government districts and urban districts, wardens and managers shall be appointed. The whole question is one which was shortly alluded to at the commencement of Business this morning, when we considered whether the same proceedings should be adopted with reference to the two districts in connection with another subject. I pointed out then why we should not assent to the proposition of the hon. Member whose Amendment was under consideration. Our point is this. In the rural districts there is a very widespread area composed of a considerable number of parishes. The particular parish is the area over which every loss would be spread, if loss is sustained; and there is, therefore, a great deal to be said in favour of the proposition that the management should, as far as possible, be left in the hands of persons elected by the ratepayers of the parish. As far as the urban district is concerned it is a district, as a whole, for rating purposes, and is not split up in the manner of rural districts. It is a small district in most cases, and the authority for the district imposes the rate upon the whole district. The Government, therefore, think that in this case, as well as in the case of a municipal borough, the Sanitary Authority ought to have the whole responsibility of the management of the allotments. Therefore, we propose that the managers shall be appointed by the Body responsible to the ratepayers, and not elected as in the rural districts. Under the plan proposed by the hon. Gentleman all sorts of difficulties will arise by dividing these urban areas into small districts. The proposal of the hon. Gentleman will, therefore, in our opinion, be impracticable.

Mr. HALLEY STEWART: I hope my hon. Friend the Member for East Northampton (Mr. Channing) will press this matter to a Division, if the Government do not give way. It will be a very simple matter for the Government to insert this Amendment; it can be done in one line. At present you have two authorities, both of whom are elected on a popular basis. Why not a third?

Mr. RITCHIE: The object of the Government is to make this Bill work. The effect of the proposal would be to place a large urban district in a state of turmoil, and put it to a great expense, for the purpose of electing managers who are to act with the Sanitary Authorities in this matter. I really do not think the game is worth the candle.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I hope the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board will adhere firmly to the position he has taken up. If there is one mischief greater than another it is that of breaking up areas into subordinate areas; that has, more than anything else, tended to introduce confusion into our system of local government, and I certainly hope that this Bill will not be marred by any such provision.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 40, after the word "persons," to add "residing in the locality of."—(*Mr. Jesse Collings.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Provisions as to letting and use of allotments).

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): It will be in the recollection of those Members of the Committee who were present at the debate on the second reading of the Bill that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board said that one principle of the Bill was that land should be let at the agricultural value; and that is the principle which I have embodied in this Amendment. If hon. Members will refer to the 2nd sub-section of Clause 2 they will see that the Sanitary Authority is prevented from buying land which they cannot let at rents which will recoup the expenses. The present clause provides that the land should be let at a rent which may be reasonably expected to secure the Sanitary Authority from loss. This is a sort of see-saw, which shows clearly that a definition of what is a reasonable rent is required. Now, that is exactly what I propose to carry out by my Amendment, and, for the reasons I have stated, I hope it will be accepted by the Government.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 10, leave out from the word "The" to the word "land," in line 14, and insert the words "allotments shall be let at such rents as agricultural or pastoral land of the same quality and similarly situate is usually let for in the same parish, with such addition to the said rents as is necessary to cover all expenses incurred by the sanitary authority under Clause 4 of this Act."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I am afraid I cannot accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Northampton. The hon. Member says that on the second reading of the Bill I made the statement that the rents were to cover the value of the land. That is perfectly true; but it will be in the recollection of the Committee that I made two propositions on the occasion —first, that the authorities should let the land at such rents as would prevent the local rates being drawn upon; and, secondly, that in fixing the rents, subject to that, regard should be had to the agricultural value of the land. The hon. Member's Amendment brings in a number of disputable questions, and a great many points are raised by it which would be very difficult for the Sanitary Authority to provide for. I think it only reasonable that if the Sanitary Authorities are to secure themselves from loss, the allotments should be let on the terms proposed by the clause.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I think the clause of the Government secures the object which the hon. Gentleman has in view far better than his Amendment. It secures to the authority a certain liberty of action, whereas the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman would compel them to make nice calculations so as to insure that the rent should exactly correspond to the agricultural value, and yet be sufficient to prevent loss. A similar difficulty arose in regard to the trustees of charities before the Act of 1882. Before then the Charity Commissioners did not like to take the responsibility of letting at a strictly defined as well as a fair price lest the charities should suffer; but, since the Act of 1882 gave them a certain amount of liberty and discretion, they have been willing to let. I think it would be far better to allow the Sanitary Authority to act freely, subject to the provisions of the Act, than to adopt the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman, which I think would not have the effect which he desires.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): What we want is practically a definition of the term "reasonable rent." I cannot find that this is explained in any part of the Bill. We were promised by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that there should be an explanation of the term; but we have not yet received it. I would suggest that the Amendment of my hon. Friend should be qualified by the insertion of the word "approximate," in reference to the rent of either agricultural land or pasturage, and I think that in that form the Government may fairly be expected to agree to it.

MR. RITCHIE: Our object is a reasonable object, and we hope that the Sanitary Authorities will endeavour to carry out the Act in the spirit in which it has been drawn. I cannot help deprecating what appears to me to be an unreasonable suspicion of hon. Gentlemen opposite with regard to this authority. I am afraid the word "approximate" will not meet the objections of the Government.

MR. CHANNING: I think that those suspicions are not unnatural, considering who are the people with whom we have to deal. A recent article in *The Mark Lane Express*, which, hon. Members will know, accurately represents the opinion of just the class from whom Guardians are generally chosen, throws the utmost contempt on the Bill on this very point. I shall not withdraw this Amendment, because I think it carries out the distinct pledge given by the Government on this matter.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I wish to point out that there is a definition of rent in line 13, which says—

> "Such rents may be from time to time charged as are reasonable, having regard to the agricultural value of the land."

That appears to me to be a sufficient indication for all practical purposes; and if the Local Authority is not to be trusted in this matter, I am afraid the whole of this Bill is a mistake.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I wish to point out that this clause is far more peremptory than that which the hon. Member for East Northampton proposes. It tells the Local Authority that the rents must be such as are reasonable without putting the Sanitary Authority to any loss, subject to the condition that the Sanitary Authority are to charge rents having regard to the agricultural value of the land. I am of opinion that if this Amendment were adopted, it would introduce restrictions and difficulties in the way of attaining the object of the Bill.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): If the hon. Member for East Northampton (Mr. Channing) insists on dividing the Committee on his Amendment, for which I cannot conceive that there is the slightest necessity, I hope he will do it at once or not at all. We wasted five minutes just now through his determination to divide the Committee, and then no Division was taken.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member press his Amendment?

MR. CHANNING: Yes.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. FULLER (Wilts, Westbury): There are two parties to this question of what is a reasonable rent. If the clause goes so far as to protect the ratepayers, I think we ought to give the tenants the assurance that they shall not pay more rent than that which amounts to the expenses and the cost of obtaining the land. I do not myself approve the principle of allowing the rent of allotments to be a subsidy to the rates in any way, and I think the idea that the rents payable under this Bill are to go in any form to subsidize the rates will destroy the confidence of the labourers in the Bill. If we allow the rents to subsidize the rates, and allow Corporations to purchase land and let it at such rent as they please, and which they may call reasonable, the result will be that exorbitant rents will be paid by the tenants. There is one corporate town which possesses a large amount of land that is let to tenants, and the authorities consider that £13 an acre is a reasonable rent for the tenants to pay; and, not satisfied with that, they have endeavoured to let a portion of the land for building purposes, in order that the rates may be further subsidized. The result of this was that almost a riot took place, the tenants refusing to have their land taken from them. We do not desire that corporate bodies should become land-jobbers; and my view is that the tenants ought to be assured that they will not have to pay one sixpence more than the actual cost of the land, and the interest on the money borrowed for the purpose of acquiring it, together with the rates and taxes and the necessary expense for making boundaries, roads, and so forth. I maintain that the Amendment which I have placed on the Paper gives a clear definition of the term "reasonable rent," by saying that the Rural Sanitary Authority in fixing the rent shall not charge more than what may be reasonably expected to cover them from loss, and I hope it will be accepted by the Government.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 11, after the word "less," to insert the words "but not more."—(*Mr. Fuller.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I quite sympathize with the object the hon. Gentleman the Member for Westbury who has just sat down has in view; but, at the same time, the Government is unable to insert these words.

If the hon. Member means that the power to charge rent shall not be used for the purpose of subsidizing the rates we are agreed; but I think it is necessary that the clause should remain in its present form, because there are many considerations which must be taken into account by the Local Authorities in fixing the rent, such as bad debts and other matters of which it is impossible to make an exact estimate beforehand. That being so, I think it would be very undesirable to add the words "but not more," which would compel the authorities to make an exact estimate and place them in a very difficult position. If there is any danger of the surplus of the rents being applied in aid of the rates this can be provided for by specific directions.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I wish to say a few words in support of the Amendment which I rise to move. I have in my hand a book written by a Conservative barrister of great authority —Mr. Hall—who advises Lord Onslow in regard to all legal matters connected with allotments. He says that payment in advance is not recommended except where the class of tenancy is peculiar, or to meet special cases. And he goes on to say that the amount of risk is so small that the mode of payment provided for seems to afford sufficient security. This relates to Lord Onslow's tenants and to the Nottingham allotments. In the case of Lord Onslow's tenants the rents are not exacted in advance, nor is the Irish tenant required to pay the rent of his holding in advance. If that is so, why is the English shopkeeper or the artizan or labourer to pay the rent of his allotment on the principle proposed in this clause? I do not see that there is any reason in the world why the allotment tenant should pay his rent beforehand, and I hope the Government will accept the Amendment which I beg to move.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 14, to leave out the words "not more than a quarter's," and insert the word "no."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I cannot think that the hon. Member has understood the scope of these words or the object of introducing them. It must be remembered that Parliament is going to give the Sanitary Authority power to acquire land compulsorily, and in my judgment it is the duty of the Sanitary Authority to protect the rates as well as the interests of the labourers. These are not compulsory words; they are limiting words, introduced to meet the case where it is desirable from the circumstances that the rent should be paid in advance. Supposing that a case arose in which the Sanitary Authority thought it proper to ask for the rent to be paid six months in advance, this clause says you shall in no case exact more than a quarter's rent in advance, and that appears to me to be a reasonable provision, enabling the Local Authority to protect the rates.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I contend that the retention of these words will make the payment of a quarter's rent in advance the invariable custom. Supposing a man is unable to pay his rent at the end of a quarter; it would be perfectly possible for the Local Authority to take such measures against him as would coerce him into paying his rent, or, if not, he could be dispossessed of his allotment. It seems to me there is no danger, as far as the rates are concerned; and if there is not, why do you make such provisions as will cover the possibility of bad debts? It will be a great hardship if you compel these men to pay their rents a quarter in advance, as would undoubtedly be the effect of this clause, because many of them are not in possession of such an amount of capital as would allow them both to pay their rent in advance and stock the ground. These men might, perhaps, have a difficulty in scraping together the money necessary to work the allotments. What would happen? The labourers are anxious to take up these allotments; they may, by borrowing from their friends, get the necessary tools and seeds for the first season's work. Now, is it very reasonable to ask that they should pay a quarter's rent in advance when they have no capital? I say it is not, and that the payment of rent should be left till the end of the quarter, by which time something may be made out of the land which will enable the labourer to pay the rent. I do not believe that any danger would arise to the ratepayers from the Amendment of my hon. Friend. On the other hand, you will, by retaining these words, be hanging a millstone around the necks of the labourers, and defeating the purpose of the Bill, which you allege to be that of conferring a benefit on the labourers. I think the words which my hon. Friend proposes to strike out are most mischievous.

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I venture to think that the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken is absolutely and entirely wrong in the whole of his argument. There is nothing in the clause, as it stands, to prevent any Sanitary Authority adopting precisely the rules which the hon. Member who moved the Amendment (Mr. Cobb) cited from Mr. Hall's book. I admit that it would be very hard to make all allotment tenants pay a quarter's rent in advance, and nobody desires anything of the kind. The Local Authority is the trustee for the ratepayers, and you are bound to give him the power of securing the interests of the ratepayer.

MR. RITCHIE: We do not wish that these words should remain, and I am quite ready to strike out "and not more than a quarter's rent shall be required to be paid in advance," so as to omit all reference to the subject. The Amendment, however, of the hon. Member would make any insistance on rent in advance illegal.

MR. COBB: I regret that I cannot agree to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. We must not forget that when the rents have been paid the parish will then have the land for nothing which will have been bought out of the rent of the allotments. I do not see how I can withdraw my Amendment. I wish to press this point—namely, that no allotment holder ought, in my opinion, under any circumstances, to be called upon to pay rent in advance.

VISCOUNT EBRINGTON (Devon, Tavistock): There is one objection to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman—namely, that the Local Authority could demand six or even 12 months' rent in advance if they liked, if these words are left out. I do not think that any landlord would make that arrangement in the present day with his tenants, and therefore I do not think it right in the case of allotments. I think if the right hon. Gentleman were to allow rent where necessary to be claimed weekly it would make the Sanitary Authority safe, and enable them to deal with the tenants with whom they might expect to have trouble in collecting the money. I do not think it reasonable to put in a provision which no landlord could persuade any tenant to agree to.

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I would point out that if we merely remove these words from the clause, it will be at the option of the Local Authorities to charge a whole year's rent in advance, and make any other conditions they may think fit. The words as they stand are, to a certain extent, a safeguard. But I do not see why the right hon. Gentleman should not be willing to agree to the Amendment of my hon. Friend (Mr. Cobb). The Local Authority would only stand in this case in the same position as the Local Authority which becomes a manufacturer of gas, and there is no more reason for charging these rents in advance than there is for charging in advance for gas or water. A labourer's wages are not paid to him in advance, and he does not have to pay house rent beforehand. I think we should be content with leaving the Local Authority in the position occupied by a landowner, and that we should provide that no rent is to be paid in advance.

MR. RITCHIE: I do not think at this moment I should go into the question of gas lighting and water, which are not on all-fours with that which is now before us. But I would point out to the noble Lord the Member for the Tavistock Division of Devon (Viscount Ebrington) that when a man who the landowner thinks cannot pay wants to take his land he can refuse to let him have it. Now the hon. Gentleman wants that the Sanitary Authority should not be allowed to ask for any rent in advance; then, on the supposition that they are applied to by a man who is neither likely to do justice to the land nor to pay the rent, are they to let that man have the land? Is it not better that they should have the power to say—"You may have the land, but we must have some rent in advance?"

MR. M'LAREN: Is it intended that the payment shall always be a quarter in advance?

MR. RITCHIE: The authorities are not compelled to ask for any rent in advance, and I hope that the necessity will seldom arise.

MR. CONYBEARE: Will the right hon. Gentleman agree to add words definitely showing that it will be optional on the part of the Local Authority to require such payment in advance?

Mr. RITCHIE: Yes.

Mr. LLEWELLYN (Somerset, N.): I am of opinion that it will be fatal in a great many cases to the operation of the Act to bind down the authorities by unnecessary words and limitations. A safeguard of this kind I think is absolutely essential to meet some cases which are likely to arise; and no authority would, I should say, undertake the letting of land without it. It is all very well to speak of what may take place between private individuals; but this is an entirely different matter. It is not to be supposed that the authorities will always insist on having rent in advance; but, as I have said, to compel them to let without doing so, as is proposed by hon. Members, would be to defeat the object they have in view, because no authority would undertake the responsibility without the discretionary power provided by the clause.

Mr. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): The effect of an Amendment of this kind is a double one. It is, no doubt, extremely undesirable that in the majority of cases the rent should be asked for in advance, and it would certainly be unpopular. If, however, the Local Authority were positively prohibited from stipulating that some rent should be so paid, the result would be that they would refuse many of the applications made to them. As an illustration, I have no doubt that the Town Council of Birmingham will avail themselves of the powers given by the Act to a large extent. The applicants for allotments will be numerous; and I ask whether it is likely that the Town Clerk can examine into the characters and qualifications of the scores of persons who will apply, and see whether every applicant is able to pay the rent of the allotment? If an applicant is allowed to pay a quarter's rent in advance, the matter will at once be settled in his favour—a simple solution which would not be possible were the Amendment of the hon. Member accepted.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 127; Noes 76: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 428.) [3 P.M.]

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 14, after the word "advance," to insert the words "in any case where it is deemed necessary by the sanitary authority."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): I rise to move the Amendment in my name, which provides that for the purpose of the Parliamentary franchise, and the municipal and all other local franchises, the tenants shall be deemed to be the occupiers, and that the rates have been paid by them notwithstanding the previous provisions contained in the Bill.

Mr. RITCHIE: We accept that.

The CHAIRMAN: I am of opinion that this cannot be introduced here. The Amendment can be made on Report.

Mr. RITCHIE: I will take care that the Proviso is inserted on the Report.

Mr. CHANNING: In rising to move the Amendment which stands in my name, I do not propose to add anything to what I said earlier in this discussion. The matter has already been so fully discussed that I will content myself by moving the Amendment without further argument.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 25, to leave out sub-section (3), and insert—"Each allotment shall consist of not more than one acre of arable, or three acres of pasture, but the sanitary authority may let more than one allotment to the same person."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'one person shall not hold any allotment or allotments' stand part of the Clause."

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have nothing to add, with regard to this Amendment, to what has been said in the discussion that has already taken place. I will, however, make an earnest appeal to the Committee. We have had an adequate discussion on this question, and I hope hon. Members will be satisfied with that discussion, and allow us to go at once to a Division. We have only two hours at our disposal, and I sincerely trust that we shall be able to finish this stage of the Bill to-day.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): Hon. Members who have opposed this proposal have assumed that it is necessary, where a cow is kept, to fence in the land; but everyone knows that it is far better that cattle should be tethered as in foreign countries, and that they should not be allowed to roam about and destroy the pasture. It would be much better if the feeding were carried on as it is in Switzerland and other countries.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I cordially welcome the proposal of the Government for the creation of cow pastures. That is the old principle of common rights, and it shows a complete change of views on the part of the Government with reference to this subject; but I am bound to say that it is not, in my opinion, quite a substitute for the proposal of the hon. Member for East Northampton (Mr. Channing). This matter ought to be regarded, in my opinion, not merely with reference to economical considerations, but also from a political point of view. There is no other country in Europe where the agricultural labourers pure and simple who work for others are not the owners of land to a considerable extent. I believe I am right in saying that at least one-half of the agricultural labourers in Continental countries are owners of from a quarter of an acre to three or four acres of land. This country is the great exception—and it seems to me to be a dangerous exception—to this rule. I admit that a change can only be effected in the direction of a more widely distributed ownership by a slow process; but, in the meantime, it seems to me that it would be a wise and in the highest sense a truly conservative thing for the Government to do what it can to faciliate the enjoyment of land by agricultural labourers. I therefore entreat the Government not to deal with this as a Party question, but to allow the Committee to vote upon it without reference to Party considerations, and then I believe it will be found that the balance of feeling in the House is in favour of the proposal of the hon. Member for East Northampton. Experience has shown how cow allotments can be enjoyed by the agricultural labourer in Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and other parts of the country, and therefore all the arguments used against the proposal fall to the ground. I think we should recollect that only one-third of the land of this country is arable, and that pasture is increasing in every direction, the result of which is that less labour is being employed on the land, and it is rendered more and more important that the interest of the agricultural labourer should be considered. As I have said, the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman is truly conservative, and will benefit the agricultural labourer in the highest sense of the term.

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield): I rise to make something in the nature of a personal explanation in connection with this matter of cow pasture. As it is my Amendment which the Government have accepted, I wish to state that I do not for one moment regard these cow pastures as substitutes for allotments. I look upon the question of cow pasture as standing side by side with the question of grass land; and while expressing my pleasure that the Government have accepted my Amendment, I would impress upon them the importance of considering an extension of the Act in the direction asked for by the hon. Member for East Northampton.

MR. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street): I think it is important that this question should not be decided without full consideration. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] I believe every Member of the Committee has a right to speak on this question, and therefore that I am entitled to make some observations. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has undoubtedly made a great change in this matter of allotments. I do not know whether that change has been brought about by the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings); but it is not long since the Government and their supporters generally considered that allotments should not be given at all. I think the hon. Member for the Bordesley Division has possibly not been so successful as he wished to be. The Bill before the Committee is one which will simply give gardens to labourers who have not got them already. In my part of the country every agricultural labourer has a garden, and therefore I may say that in the counties of Northumberland and Durham the Bill will confer no benefit whatever. We want something more than is offered by the Bill; we want the agricultural labourer to have something more than vegetables for his table of his own providing. If possible we want him to have a cow, and for that purpose we must give him at least three acres of grass. From this considerable advantages would result, among them the advantage of education, because very few families really know anything about the making of butter and the management of cattle. We shall thus confer a double benefit. Again, we shall encourage the labourer to exercise thrift, because when once a man gets a cow he will naturally begin to make the most of his position. These are things which we ought to encourage, and I believe that the effect of the Bill, if we succeed in this Amendment, would be to create a demand for larger allotments. We have butter, eggs, and cheese imported from abroad in enormous quantities; and I am sure we shall not be able to produce the amount of food required in this country until we have not only a system of allotments, but also a system of small holdings suitable for farming purposes. Finally, I say that by accepting this Amendment we shall, by inducing agricultural labourers to work these allotments themselves, give them the hope of getting small holdings of their own, and thereby confer a real benefit on the agricultural community. I hope my hon. Friend will press his Amendment to a Division, and that the result will be favourable to the agricultural labourer.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I should like to understand before we go to a Division whether it is intended that the labourer shall have an acre of arable land, or whether, in addition he is to have three acres of pasture for a cow?

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): The argument of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board is that three acres would be of no use for keeping a cow, and that the proposal to give this quantity of land assumes the possession of more capital than the labourer is likely to have. But that is a question which depends on the character of the labourers. We have heard it stated that artizans as well as labourers are to be admitted to the benefits of this Bill; and, that being so, it is quite open to belief that they will be able to get sufficient capital for the purpose of getting a cow. I live in a county where it is almost impossible for agricultural labourers to get any milk at all. The whole of it is sent to London, and that shows the reasonableness of what we are urging upon the Government. The hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) said that we are going back to the ancient system of common right under the provision offered by the Government. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) stated in a volume published some time ago that more than 6,500,000 acres of land had been taken from the people of the country; and I think, if we are to go back to the ancient system, we should begin by giving back that land. But there is one suggestion I should like to make, and which has not been brought forward in the course of this discussion. It is this—you will do a great deal of benefit by giving these allotments, because the young people living in the different localities will have an inducement to remain there. At present, there is not sufficient employment in the country for young men as they grow up, and consequently they drift into our great cities. That is an admitted evil, and I contend that the great advantage of allotments would be that by them will be provided an easy kind of labour with which old men can occupy themselves in their declining years, and that young men will be raised up to take their places in the field. This is one of the highest advantages which the Bill can be made to confer, and I urge it upon the consideration of the Committee. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) is always saying that arable land does not pay the farmers. If that is so, there is all the more reason why arable land should be cut up and turned into these small holdings. I regard this Amendment as a critical and a test Amendment; and the Division will show who is in favour of the agricultural labourer and who is not.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I support this Amendment very heartily, because I have had the opportunity in Ireland of seeing the enormous difference between families who have cows and those who cannot keep them. I think it is a very great advantage that the children of a family, especially the girls, should learn to milk, because in the Colonies and in other conditions of life in which they may be placed it would be of the greatest service to them. Another point in favour of this Amendment is that it can be very easily put in operation by the authorities. They have only to take a field of 30 acres, subdivide it, and let it to the people who want it. I have already told the Committee that it is my intention to move that the Bill should be extended to Ireland; and I support this Amendment, because the value of the Bill will thereby be greatly enhanced.

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has stated that the Government wish to make this Bill work; and I can assure him that the desire is shared by all Members on this side of the House. Now, it is ridiculous to suppose that one acre of land is sufficient for the keep of a cow. You have to provide hay for the winter, and it must be extremely good land if less than three-quarters of an acre would produce sufficient hay for a cow during the winter months. Again, I think the right hon. Gentleman spoke of roots; but roots alone will not keep a cow. We have great experience of cow-keeping in Northumberland and Durham, where the cattle roam over large areas of such land as is proposed by the Government to be given, in addition to the allotments. I do not believe that any labouring man can, by spade work, make these allotments pay. What we want is one-eighth, or even a sixteenth, of an acre of garden land; and, for cow-keeping, three acres of good, four acres of indifferent, and a larger area of poor land. I trust the Government will agree to the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Northampton.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 108; Noes 85: Majority 23.—(Div. List, No. 429.) [3.55 P.M.]

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire move his Amendment?

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Yes, Sir; in line 25, I wish to leave out the words "one acre," in order to insert the words—

> "Half an acre, but if the claims of other applicants have first been satisfied, and if there afterwards remain allotments for distribution, more than one allotment may be let to the same person."

I will not detain the Committee for more than two or three moments, or, at any rate, for more than is necessary, to explain the object of the Amendment, and the reasons why I propose it. The Committee will observe that in the Bill the maximum for an allotment is fixed at one acre. Perhaps, as a general rule, one acre would be the amount granted; but I provide in my Amendment that the maximum should be half an acre, with the proviso that in certain circumstances the authorities should have power to grant more than one allotment to the same person. It would not, therefore, if my Amendment were accepted, be necessary to limit the maximum amount to one acre. I think a hard-and-fast line is undesirable, and that some discretion, under peculiar circumstances, ought to be left to the Sanitary Authority. As the Bill is drawn, it withholds discretion altogether, and under no circumstances can anyone hold more than one acre. My experience with regard to this matter teaches me that undoubtedly, as a general rule—and I do not suppose that either the Government or hon. Gentlemen opposite will doubt it—half-an-acre for allotment purposes is ample, and is very often more than ample. It always seemed to me, with regard to this particular question, that one acre is neither one thing nor the other. One acre is too small for a holding or a farm, and, as a general rule, it is too large for an allotment pure and simple. I have spoken to a great many agricultural labourers on this question. I have conversed with them and ascertained their views, and I find that in almost every case where I have let allotments myself and have taken pains to ascertain what is the amount of land that the peasantry really require, that in 99 cases out of 100 half-an-acre is as much as they can do with. I am certain that the result of giving an acre will be that in general cases where one acre of land is given it will be badly cultivated, as it will be more than the man can really manage; but if you give half-an-acre, it will be cultivated to perfection. Upon this subject I would quote an authority which, unless I am very much mistaken, will be regarded as a very high authority by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I am sorry I have not got a copy of the evidence taken before the Agricultural Commission with me; but I can tell the Committee from memory what Mr. Joseph Arch stated to that Commission some years ago. I gather from his evidence that, as a general rule, he thought that a quarter of an acre would be sufficient for an allotment; but he said—

> "What I would do is this—I would not lay down any limit at all; I would give a man a quarter of an acre to begin with, and if he cultivated that well I would give him another quarter of an acre; but if he did not cultivate it well I would not give him any more."

That is what I now ask the Committee to do, only that instead of giving a quarter of an acre I am much more liberal than Mr. Arch. I am aware that there may be exceptions to the general rule. There may be cases of men with large and very industrious families, and in these cases I can believe that one acre might be well cultivated, or even two or three acres; but such cases, I venture to say, would be amply provided for by this Amendment. However unpopular this proposal may be with hon. Members who wish to develop this allotment system into a system of small farms or holdings, I declare that the Amendment is the result of personal experience, and that I should be failing in my duty if I did not put the matter frankly and fairly before the Committee. I am certain that if you want to make a practical, business-like arrangement, you will limit the maximum of your allotments to half-an-acre to begin with. I beg leave to move my Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 26, leave out the words "one acre," in order to insert the words "half an acre; but if the claims of other applicants have first been satisfied, and if there afterwards remain allotments for distribution, more than one allotment may be let to the same person."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'one acre' stand part of the Clause."

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. LONG) (Wilts, Devizes): Everyone will admit at once the great experience of my right hon. Friend (Mr. Chaplin), and every-one will admit his right to express an opinion on this subject. No one has a better right to express an opinion upon it. I have paid close attention to his observations, and I have considered his view; but I think the Committee will see that between the proposal of my right hon. Friend and that contained in the Bill there is very little difference. My right hon. Friend proposes that in cases where tenants are able to work more than half-an-acre, more than half an acre should be granted; but under the Bill the Sanitary Authority would have power in cases where they thought that an acre would be too much to grant allotments of a smaller extent. I admit the correctness of the statement of my right hon. Friend that in 99 cases out of 100 half-an-acre is as much as any labourer can want or can work with satisfaction or profit; but, on the other hand, there are cases which have occurred within my own experience within the last 12 months, where applications have been made by 10 or 12 persons to have a larger grant to begin with, and the Government think that it would effect the object that we have in view much better by enabling the Sanitary Authority to grant a maximum of one acre where they think it desirable, with power to reduce it where they do not think it desirable. We think that there is sufficient difference between the two proposals to justify us in adhering to the proposal in the Bill, and in thus leaving it to the Local Authority to grant an acre if they think fit.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to withdraw the Amendment. The subject of it has practically been disposed of, and as we have a great deal to do to-day I think he would be acting wisely in refraining from pressing his Amendment.

MR. CHAPLIN: If I thought that by pressing my Amendment to a Division I could carry it, I certainly would press it; but, under the circumstances, as I gather I shall not have much support, I should only be wasting time by insisting upon my proposal, and I therefore withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SIR JOHN SWINBURNE (Staffordshire, Lichfield): I have an Amendment, in line 26, to leave out "one acre," and insert "six acres." May I ask if that is now out of Order?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): I have the following Amendment on the Paper, in line 40, after the word "allotments," to add the words—

> "But at any time during a tenancy, and before the expiration of any notice determining the same, such stables, cattle sheds, pigstyes, fowl houses, greenhouses, and tool houses, together with fruit and other trees and bushes, may be removed by the tenant."

I see the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board proposes to insert this Amendment, in line 36, after "building," to insert "other than a tool house, green house, fowl house, or pigstye." The right hon. Gentleman has adopted my Amendment, but has left out the words "stables" and "cattle sheds." I would put it to him that a stable may be absolutely necessary to the occupier of an allotment. He may have a pony or donkey, and surely a place to stable it will be as necessary to him as to have a stye for his pigs or a house for his fowls. There is another Amendment on the Paper in the name of the hon. Member for North Dorsetshire (Mr. Portman), to add after "tool houses" the words "and a common barn," and if that Amendment had been placed before the House I should have been ready to accept it, because I consider that a common barn may be as necessary to some allotment holders as a fowl house or a pigstye or a stable.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member move his Amendment?

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: Not the one next on the Paper. I understand there is an Amendment by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board which will precede the one to which I have been referring. I would propose to insert in the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment the words "stables, cattle sheds."

MR. LONG: The Government cannot possibly accept this Amendment, and I would point out to the hon. Member that the only reason he has submitted to the Committee for its being adopted is that if an allotment tenant desires to keep a donkey or pony he should have a place to keep it in. Well, if an allotment holder wishes to have a donkey or pony, he may have it; but it does not follow that he should keep it on his allotment. The most natural thing would be for him to have a stable adjoining his house. I think that as the Government have consented to the proposal to allow tool houses, green houses, fowl houses, and pigstyes to be erected on the allotments, that is all which ought properly to be asked of us. We cannot agree to any extension.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: Will the hon. Gentleman accept "cattle sheds?"

MR. LONG: No.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): Then we are to understand that the allotment holder is to be allowed to keep a pig if he likes, but is not to be allowed to keep a calf or a cow. By resisting proposals of this kind the Government are practically crippling the Bill. I have not taken part in the discussions in Committee to any extent, because, bad as the Bill is, I have been anxious to see it passed into law; but I do feel it necessary now to protest against the Government opposing this proposal to allow a man to keep a cattle shed on his holding if he thinks fit.

MR. CHAPLIN: I am sure that the protest of the hon. Member is raised in absolute ignorance of this subject. What is an allotment? It is a small strip of ground separated from another by nothing but a narrow pathway a few inches broad.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: I did not propose that stables should be erected on every allotment.

MR. CHAPLIN: But the hon. Member would propose that a stable and cattle shed may be erected if necessary.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: Yes, may be.

MR. CHAPLIN: What, I ask again, are allotments? They are narrow strips of ground close together, and the hon. Gentleman desires that there should be power to put donkeys and cows upon them in sheds. But how are you going to get cattle on to a man's allotment? How are you going to get them into the shed and out again? Does the hon. Member desire to see half-a-dozen head of stock trampling over the onion beds and cabbage beds on these narrow strips of ground? In the case of a pig, it is taken into the stye probably when small and never leaves it again until it goes to the butcher; but that is not the case with cattle or a donkey or a pony. It would be perfectly impossible for a man to erect these buildings on his holding. For my own part, I think the Government have gone rather too far in admitting fowl houses. You cannot keep your fowls—[*Laughter*]. An hon. Member laughs, but will he do me the favour to listen to what appears to me to be a very practical statement? You cannot always keep your fowl in a fowl house, except when they are being prepared for the market. Then what are you to do if you have them on the allotment? You must let them loose, and then they will run all over the allotments, not only over the allotment of their owner, but over those of his neighbours also. Do you suppose that people who devote great care and attention to their allotments will like to see fowls belonging to their neighbours let loose on their ground to scratch it over, and probably destroy the result of their labours? I must say I trust this proposal will not be persevered in.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden): I will not follow the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire through the humorous speech he has made, especially at this late hour of the day, as I wish the Committee to make progress with the Bill this afternoon; but I would point out one thing which, in his humorous description, the right hon. Gentleman has failed to appreciate. He seems to think that by the proposal which has been made hon. Members desire that cattle sheds should be built upon every one of these allotments. I do not suppose there would be any such desire; but this might happen. Possibly, the labourers holding several of these allotments might desire to have a plough, and might desire to work the land in common amongst them. In such a case I cannot see for the life of me why you should not allow a labourer, at any rate, to have the power and opportunity of raising a cattle shed or a stable which may be used in common by himself and his fellow allotments holders. That is often done among the crofters in Scotland. I would urge the Government to consider this question, and I do think it would be well for them to yield upon this point.

Mr. C. W. GRAY (Essex, Maldon): I quite agree with what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire as to the impossibility of allowing arrangements to be made for stock-keeping on allotments. If these arrangements were carried into operation we might find these allotments converted into small farms, which is quite foreign to the principle of this Bill. But, at the same time, I think there should be a little more elasticity in the words it is proposed to insert. Either now or on the Report stage the Government might introduce into this clause the word "shed." That would be a general term, and would allow a building to be erected which could be used for other purposes than those described in the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I have an Amendment to insert, after "allotment," in line 36, "without the consent in writing of the allotments management committee." These words, if adopted, would give power to the Local Managers to exercise their own discretion in the matter. I think the Government would do wisely to insert this Amendment, or something like it. I know allotment farms where there are a good many buildings erected, including, I think, stables. The wording of the subsection, as it now stands, is absolutely prohibitory. Unless it is amended, no building can be erected on any part of an allotment; but I think it is very desirable to allow such buildings to be put up.

Mr. RITCHIE: I should be willing to insert an Amentment here to include the word shed. I hope that will be accepted and satisfy hon. Members.

Mr. FULLER (Wilts, Westbury): Will the right hon. Gentleman include the words "common barn?" I am at this moment engaged in erecting on an allotment field a common barn, at the particular request of the allotment holders. The tenants pay rent for the allotments, and whatever risk is to be run by the erection of the barn it is their affair. The risk to the ratepayers will be very small. It is desirable to give allotment holders a barn, so that they can thrash out their corn with a common flail, instead of getting a steam machine. A barn would enable them to thrash in bad weather, and, moreover, would save them expense.

MR. C. W. GRAY: I would suggest that if the Government adopt the word shed they may leave out the words tool house, and fowl house. They will be quite unnecessary, and it will simplify the Bill to leave them out.

MR. RITCHIE: I think I must retain these words. It does not necessarily follow that because these words are contained in the Bill that structures of this kind will be erected. On some allotments it may be desirable to have a shed; but some other structure for a tool house or fowl house may also be necessary. I would much prefer to have all these words in, so that the sub-section may be as inclusive as possible.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 36, after "buildings," insert "other than a tool house, green house, fowl house or pigstye."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon Member for Ashburton propose his Amendment?

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: I am content with the insertion of the word "shed;" but I hope the words "common barn" will also be inserted.

MR. CONYBEARE: (Cornwall, Camborne): Are we to understand that a shed may be used for a horse or a donkey? [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members may laugh; but I have a right to have this cleared up. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) was particularly emphatic just now against allowing an occupier of a holding to have a horse or a pony or a donkey housed upon that holding. I should think this is a very important matter, because allotment holders may want to keep an animal of this kind, in order to take their crops to market, and so on. All I desire is that in accepting the proposal the Committee shall know exactly what it means.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: I take it that the shed is to cover something. It may cover a donkey as well as anything.

MR. CONYBEARE: Do we understand that the word "shed" the Government propose to insert shall go farther than what we might consider included in the previous words, green house, fowl house, and tool house? According to the common construction of Acts of Parliament to use the word "shed," coming after these other words, would not include any other purpose.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): If a shed is constructed upon an allotment, of course it will be legal to use it for any purpose for which a shed can be used.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, after the words "fowl house," to add "shed."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'shed' be there inserted."

MR. CHAPLIN: Before the Amendment is accepted I would ask the Government whether, if they are successful in the Amendment they propose, they would be prepared to accept the Amendment I have on the Paper lower down. The object of the Government Amendment, I presume, is to enable structures to be placed upon allotments, but to prevent their being used for residential purposes. Well, I propose to insert, after the word "erected," in line 36 of the clause, the words "for use as a dwelling house or workshop." The Committee will observe that that Amendment will give a very much wider discretion even than the Amendment moved by Her Majesty's Government. What I am afraid of is this—that if the Amendment moved in the terms proposed by Her Majesty's Government specifying these particular buildings is inserted in the Bill, it will be taken as a kind of direction or instruction for people to erect buildings on them. According to my proposal, nothing would be specified at all, and the question of erecting buildings, sheds, or otherwise, would be left to the common sense of the occupiers of the allotments themselves.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: The right hon. Gentleman appears to forget that allotment cultivators are not without common sense, and would not be likely to erect sheds or tool houses, or fowl houses unless they want to turn them to some use. They certainly would not be likely to erect them simply because they have power to do so.

Question, "That the word 'shed' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): In reference to the Amendment I have on the Paper, I would briefly protest against the restrictive enactment the Government would pass against any building being erected on an allotment. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire has given us a definition of an allotment—a narrow strip of land not partitioned off or divided from the other allotments adjoining; but I say an allotment may be a strip of land to which a cottage may be attached. If this Bill passes as it stands, it will be of very little use. If in the Northern parts of Britain a Municipal Authority took lands, the first thing they would endeavour to do would be to get pieces of land on which cottages with gardens could be erected. I do not think anyone would be so insane as to think that the owner of a small allotment could cultivate wheat upon it with profit——

THE CHAIRMAN: The observations of the hon. Member are altogether irrelevant.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I protest against the clause passing without power being given to erect buildings and dwelling houses upon the allotments.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: I have an Amendment on the Paper, the early part of which covers the point which we have already decided, but the latter portion of which deals with the crops which may be removed from the land by the tenant.

MR. RITCHIE: That Amendment is covered by that portion of the Bill referring to cottage gardens.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: No; these words deal with what may be removed by the tenant. It has nothing to do with planting.

MR. RITCHIE: I had better move my Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 40, at end, insert "if any building so allowed to be erected is erected upon an allotment then at the end of the tenancy, neither the sanitary authority nor the incoming tenant shall be bound to take any such building, or pay any compensation therefor, but the outgoing tenant shall be at liberty, before the expiration of his tenancy, to remove the same, and, if he fails to do so the sanitary authority may pull down the building, and dispose of the materials, and apply the proceeds in like manner as if it were a building prohibited to be erected."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: I beg to move in line 5 of the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman, after the word "same," to add the words "together with fruit trees and other trees and bushes, may be removed by the tenant."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, in line 5, after the word "same," to insert the words "together with fruit trees and other trees, and bushes may be removed by the tenant." —(*Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. LONG: Those words will be included.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. CONYBEARE: It will be in the recollection of most of the Members of the Committee that we fought the question of compensation for these improvements, and were defeated by the right hon. Gentlemen opposite. We wished that in all cases these men should have compensation for the fruit trees they had planted, but they were not allowed to have compensation unless they had first obtained permission from their landlords to plant fruit trees, &c.——

MR. RITCHIE: The Amendment we have just agreed to simply implies that the tenant may be at liberty to remove these things.

MR. CONYBEARE: Then, I have no objection.

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Recovery of rent and possession of allotments).

VISCOUNT WOLMER (Hants, Petersfield): I beg to move, in page 5, line 4, to leave out the words "forty days," and insert "one half-year." It seems to me that 40 days is too short a time to insert in this sub-section. If a man takes an allotment for a certain period of years, it may be six months before he receives any return from it, and before he is able to pay his rent. Within 40 days he may not have received any benefit, and may not be able to pay his rent. I beg, therefore, to move this Amendment.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 4, leave out the words "forty days," and insert the words "one half-year."—(*Viscount Wolmer.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed, to be left out, stand part of the Clause."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I cannot accept this Amendment. The words "40 days" are taken from existing Acts—allotments are treated in this manner under the Enclosure Acts. It seems to me that 40 days is quite long enough to allow a man to get in arrear. The allotment holder will have incurred the rent, and for 40 days will not have paid it.

VISCOUNT WOLMER: Do I understand that this means 40 days after the rent has fallen due?

MR. RITCHIE: Yes.

VISCOUNT WOLMER: Then, to save the time of the Committee, I will not proceed with the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): The Amendment which now stands in my name—that is to say, in line 4, to leave out the words "it appears to the Sanitary Authority," in connection with other Amendments, really raises the question as to what fixity of tenure there is to be under this Act; and I propose that Sub-section 2 of Clause 7 should read—

> "If the rent for any allotment is in arrear for not less than forty days, or if it appears to the sanitary authority that the tenant of an allotment, in the judgment of the local manager, has not kept his allotment in a good state of cultivation, or is permanently resident more than two miles out of the district or parish for which the allotments are provided, the Sanitary Authority may serve upon the tenant, or, if he is residing out of the district or parish, give public notice determining the tenancy at the expiration of one month after the notice has been so served or given, and thereupon such tenancy shall be determined accordingly, but no tenancy of any allotment shall be determined by notice or otherwise for any other reason: Provided that in every such case the sanitary authority or the incoming tenant shall, on demand, pay to the tenant whose tenancy is so determined any compensation due to him as an outgoing tenant."

I wish to embody this principle in the Bill, that no allotment holder shall be evicted from his holding except for three reasons—that is to say, for non-payment of rent, or for not keeping the allotment in a certain state of cultivation, or for living a certain distance away. I have put the distance at two miles; but I am not particular as to that. Under the clause, as it stands, a man may be evicted for breaking any regulation which may be laid down by the owner of the allotment—regulations which might be of all kinds. I could give many instances of regulations such as I have frequently known to be laid down. I have known one case in the neighbourhood of Leamington where a lady laid down, as a rule in granting allotments, that no man holding an allotment from her should work on Sunday. I do not wish to express an opinion as to whether or not it is right to work on Sundays. That is a different thing. I know of another rule laid down which declares that no man shall use certain language—language which the landlady does not like. The landlady is not content with requiring the cultivation of the land, but requires a moral cultivation of the tenant as well; and if he does not conform to her standard, it is a reason for evicting him from his holding. On page 20 of Mr. Hall's book, he says in examining Weyland's Act, which refers to allotments, it is found laid down that an allotment is to be held from year to year, and that notice to quit is only to be given to the tenant when he is four weeks in arrear, or if the land has not been duly cultivated. "Thus," says Mr. Hall, "fixity of tenure is secured to a good tenant." The Act I refer to is 2 *Will.* IV. c. 42, s. 5. Then, in 8 & 9 *Vict.* c. 118, s. 110, there is contained a further provision, as mentioned in page 203 of Hall's book, giving fixity of tenure. I think I have put my case very clearly before the Committee, and I will not occupy further time in dealing with it. What I want to establish is this — that no man shall be evicted from his holding unless his rent is in arrear for a specified time, or unless he has neglected the proper cultivation of the land—and how this question of proper cultivation is to be decided I do not say, but leave it open—or unless he has ceased to live within a reasonable distance, which I put in this Amendment at two miles.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 4, to leave out "it appears to the Sanitary Authority."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE: I think the hon. Gentleman has hit upon a very convenient mode of disposing of the whole series of Amendments he has on the Paper at one time. So far as I understand it, the only difference between him and the Government is that he prefers to extend the distance from one to two miles, and would not allow a tenant to be turned out of his holding for breaking the regulations of the tenancy. We think it cannot be any injustice to a tenant that he should be called on to observe the conditions on which he took his holding. These regulations are supposed to be made not in the interests of any one individual tenant, but in the interests of all the tenants, and in the interests of the ratepayers; and it seems to me that if you were to say to the tenant that he could practically set at nought all the regulations and conditions under which he took his allotment it would be utterly useless to make any regulations whatever. Let me point out that it is not only in the interests of the ratepayers that these regulations would be made. It will be in the interests of the allotment holders themselves. These allotments will be all side by side, and every tenant should be a party to the regulations, which are meant for the security and comfort and convenience of them all. I can well imagine that if the tenants were at liberty to ignore the regulations, there might a person of such a disposition that he might render the lives of the adjoining allotment holders almost intolerable. Therefore I would venture to suggest to the hon. Gentleman that it would not be in the interests of the tenants generally that any one of them should be able to free himself from the engagement he had entered into, and practically to ignore all the arrangements which have been made. I would point out that fully two months are given during which a man may reside away from his allotment; but if he comes home within that time he must conform to the regulations under which he took the allotment.

Mr. COBB: That refers to what he may have to do on the allotment.

Mr. RITCHIE: Unless within three months he conforms to the regulations laid down by the authorities, he may be turned out of his holding. I do not think that that is unjust or unfair. We have put in the Bill that these regulations shall be referred to the Local Government Board for their sanction, and the hon. Member may rely that every precaution will be taken that the regulations shall not be arbitrary or unnecessary, but such as can be reasonably imposed; and that being so, I think that every tenant can be reasonably called upon to abide by these regulations. With regard to distance, the Bill provides for this, that if an allotment holder goes away to live, not a mile from his allotment, but a mile outside the district which provides the allotment, then he shall cease to hold the allotment. The hon. Member, however, proposes to make it two miles——

Mr. COBB: I do not care for that point.

Mr. RITCHIE: Then I will not enter into that matter further.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I quite sympathize with the object of the hon. Member for Rugby. Those who have seen agreements entered into with regard to allotments have seen some very curious things. I know one case in which a tenant was under obligation to keep so many hens and so many cocks—and he had to enter into an elaborate undertaking as to the number of them, and so on. I do not think the hon. Gentleman need fear any such regulations as that, seeing that the rules are to be framed as has been pointed out, and seeing that the moment the Bill becomes law, the administration of it in the rural districts will be in the hands of a purely electoral body, I do not think that any of these dangers are to be apprehended.

Mr. COBB: I would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. COBB: There is a small point I should like to ask the Committee to deal with; it is a very small one, and one that it is hardly worth while spending many words over. I think that, instead of affixing the notice under this section to "the door of the church of the parish in which the allotment is situate," it would be better to strike those words out, and to put in the words "give public notice." I would move to insert those words.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 10, leave out from "affix" to "written," in line 12, and insert "give public notice."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE: I think this is a matter of some importance. The church door is the place where notices of this kind are usually posted in parishes. The tenant will be supplied with the conditions under which he holds his allotment, and surely it will be no hardship upon him, knowing those conditions, if we provide that the notice shall be affixed to the church door—it will be no hardship to require him to go to the church door to see it.

Mr. COBB: I would suggest that the notice should be affixed not merely to the church door, but to the doors of all the places of worship in the district. A great number of people never go to church, and therefore will know nothing about the notice if it is merely placed on the door of the parish church. What objection can there be to my proposal?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): I do not think the hon. Member can really be serious in this suggestion. If it were carried out it might involve the posting of notices in some cases on 15 or 20 public buildings in the parish, and that might be a costly process. Surely it will be a far more simple and satisfactory method if we adhere to the words of the section. The parish church is a place which can always be found, and it can be no hardship to require a man to go to the door of the parish church in order to see these notices.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): I know some parishes in Wales where no church can be found at all, and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to adopt in those cases the practice usually followed by the Local Government Board in these matters. Notices of this kind should be placed where they are usually put up in Welsh parishes—on the school house or some other public building.

Mr. RITCHIE: I will provide on Report for districts in which there are no churches.

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I think this question of distance is one which the Government ought to consider carefully. I have in my mind a parish in Leicestershire where it was found necessary for persons living in one parish to have allotments in another parish some distance away. I do not think the Government would do a hardship to anyone by making the distance in the provision two miles instead of one.

Mr. RITCHIE: I think the point of the hon. Member who moved the Amendment was this. We provide in the Bill that if an allotment holder goes to reside out of the parish which grants the allotment then he shall cease to be an allotment holder in that parish. The allotment may be some distance from the parish, but that is not the point. The point is that if a man goes into a parish and the authorities have provided him with an allotment, and he goes and lives miles away from that allotment in another parish, he should go to that new parish for a new allotment; otherwise he would be holding an allotment which ought to belong to a man residing in the parish which he has left.

Mr. CHANNING: I will not discuss the matter, but would point out that what was previously discussed was the question of fixity of tenure. It is very desirable that allotment tenants should be encouraged to improve their allotments, and should have as permanent an interest in them as possible. I do not think the Government would do any harm by accepting this suggestion.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member withdraw his Amendment?

Mr. COBB: Yes, I withdraw it.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

The CHAIRMAN: The next Amendment is in the name of the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): I think the next is in my name—in lines 12 and 13, to leave out "one month," and to insert "six months." The sub-section provides that the tenancy shall terminate one month after the notice has been served, and I propose to make that period six months.

Amendment proposed, in page 5, lines 12 and 13, leave out the words "one month" and insert the words "six months."—(*Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. RITCHIE: I cannot accept this Amendment, as it seems to me that the remedy in this matter should be rapid. A tenant may have gone no one knows where, and the result of leaving the allotment six months idle might be to let it go to wreck and ruin. Under such a provision as that proposed, it might be impossible to let the allotment for six months after the tenant has left it.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: In my neighbourhood men go away for three months, and sometimes for six months at a time.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: But in those cases the tenants have not ceased to reside in the parish, and the Bill contemplates the case where a man has left the parish altogether, or may be said to have done so. They do not all of them leave wives and children behind.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS: I do not think the hon. Member who moves this Amendment can have read the clause. We have already provided, by an Amendment which the Government have accepted, that not only reasonable but ample notice shall be given to every man who is turned out. But this is the case of a man who turns himself out, and yet would remain legally the tenant, unless measures were taken to dispossess him. Unless you have some means of determining legally the tenancy which the man himself has determined practically, I do not know what the Local Authority could do with the allotment. They could not let it, they could not get any money for it. This provision will only apply in certain cases which must of necessity be provided for.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: I only referred to my own locality, where a great many of the people are fishermen, and go away for several months at a time.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. Seale-Hayne

MR. CHANNING: The next Amendment is in my name, as follows:—In line 17, after "tenant," to insert—

"And such compensation shall be assessed by an arbitrator appointed by the allotments management committee, or, if the tenant so elect, either by an arbitrator appointed under 'The Allotments and Cottage Gardens Compensation Act, 1887,' or by a reference under 'The Agricultural Holdings (England) Act, 1883.'"

I should like to know, before I move this Amendment, whether any amendment of this part of the section is considered necessary? The words "of the tenancy" are required after "commencement."

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Some alteration is necessary.

MR. CHANNING: Then I move to insert the words which I have just read. I will not repeat here the serious objections I have taken to the procedure under the Allotments and Cottage Gardens Compensation Act. All I wish to do is to give the tenant a reasonable alternative as to the mode in which his compensation shall be assessed. This is not a large question, but I think it is important that the tenant should be allowed to take of several methods of securing compensation whichever one he thinks most desirable.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 17, after the word "tenant," insert the words—"And such compensation shall be assessed by an arbitrator appointed by the allotments management committee, or, if the tenant so elect, either by an arbitrator appointed under 'The Allotments and Cottage Gardens Compensation Act, 1887,' or by a reference under 'The Agricultural Holdings (England) Act, 1883.'—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 8 *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Sale of superfluous or unsuitable land).

MR. CHAPLIN (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The object of the Amendment which stands in my name is partially provided for in the Bill as it stands now. I shall be corrected if I am wrong, when I say that Sub-section 3 of Clause 9 provides to a great extent for the object which I have in view in my Amendment. It provides that the Sections 128 to 132 of the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act shall apply upon any sale by a Sanitary Authority of any land. Unless

I am misinformed, these sections do not include building land. It appears to me that ought to be provided for. In my opinion, it is only right that the landlord should have the first offer of the land if it is parted with by the Sanitary Authority, and that he should be allowed to buy it for the price at which it was originally purchased. According to my Amendment, building land will be included within the clause.

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 32, after the word "exchange," insert the words—"But the owner from whom the land was purchased or his assigns shall first have the offer and the right to repurchase the land for the same price at which it was purchased by such authority."—(*Mr. Chaplin.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): If these words are to be inserted, they will require further consideration. Some further provision is required—namely, as to the condition of the land, or as to whether it still remains in the same hands, and is let in the same way. I think it would be well if the right hon. Gentleman were to leave the matter over till Report.

MR. CHAPLIN: I shall be glad to postpone the Amendment until Report, if the Government will consider it by then.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I think the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act does not contemplate the sale price.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): Will the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General consider my proposed Amendment to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) in drawing up the clause?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Yes.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I hope the hon. and learned Attorney General will do nothing of the kind.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Power for allotment wardens or allotment trustees to transfer to sanitary authority).

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): The object of the Amendment I am about to move is to bring all the parish allotments under one authority—as far as we can under the authority we are going to establish by this Bill. I believe there are no less than four allotments authorities of various kinds under different Acts of Parliament. At all events, I propose that the allotments wardens under the Inclosure Act of 1875 should hand over their allotments gardens to the newly-constituted allotments authorities.

Amendment proposed, in page 7, line 21, to leave out from the words "may by agreement," to the words "partly situate," in line 22, and insert the word "shall."—(*Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): As the Committee no doubt knows, there are in certain Acts of Parliament certain allotment authorities with certain machinery fixed. What we provide for is that these may be transferred to the allotment wardens. We have enabled them, the one to give up and the other to take, and I hardly think it is desirable to go any farther.

MR. SEALE-HAYNE: Let me call attention to the difference between my two Amendments, my Amendment with regard to the allotment wardens under the Inclosure Act of 1845, and my Amendment in regard to the subsequent authority established in 1882. I propose that the allotment wardens under the Inclosure Act shall by compulsion transfer their allotments to the new allotment wardens; but in regard to the allotment authorities established in 1882, I propose to make their property transferable upon the requisition of the Sanitary Authority, and not otherwise. I sincerely hope the right hon. Gentleman will consent to the transference of the allotments under the Inclosure Act to the new authority.

MR. RITCHIE: In both cases the transference would be compulsory if there was a requisition. I have very little doubt that, in course of time, all these matters will be in one hand; but I do not think we ought, before we see how the machinery of the Bill will work, to impose the obligation on the wardens who manage the allotments already existing by Statute to absolutely transfer all their duties and responsibilities to an authority which, after all, is only about to be set up.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE: I should like to move my second Amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: It refers to the same point.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE: It refers to a different set of allotment authorities—the authorities who were constituted under the Act of 1882. There is a difference in the allotments; the ground which the allotments authorities constituted in 1882 have is valuable and good ground, while the ground in the hands of the allotments authorities constituted under the Inclosure Act of 1845 is very poor. We all supposed when the Act of 1882 was passed that the working classes would be able to get allotments out of the charity lands. As a matter of fact, they have hardly been able to do so on account of the alteration made in the Bill which compelled them to apply to the Charity Commissioners in London, instead of applying, as the Bill was originally drawn, to, I think, the County Court, or, at all events, to some Local Authority. I wish to give to the newly-constituted allotments authorities power, if they desire to possess it, of acquiring charity lands.

Amendment proposed, in page 7, line 31, leave out the words "may if they think fit," and insert the words "shall, if required by the sanitary authority."—(*Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I hope the hon. Member (Mr Seale-Hayne) will not persevere with this Amendment. The Allotments Act of 1882 does not set up any new authority at all, but the local trustees are the same under the Act as they were before; and in a variety of cases these trustees hold lands part of which come under the Act of 1882, and part of which do not. It will be very difficult, therefore, for the Sanitary Authorities to take over the lands without taking over the obligations of the trustees in respect of fuel and other doles, and at the same time dealing with the educational matters which come under the same trusteeships, and which are not affected by the Allotments Act of 1882. My hon. Friend is quite mistaken in his suggestion that the Act has not been enforced. It has been enforced.

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE: I will not detain the Committee.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 11 (As to combination of parishes and contributory places).

Mr. RITCHIE: I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment proposed,

In page 8, line 8, after the word "place," to insert the words, "and the Parliamentary electors for the contributing place shall be the persons registered in any list of Parliamentary electors for any parish wholly in such contributory place, or for any parish partly therein, if registered in respect of any qualification, situate in such contributory place."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: I am not quite sure, I perfectly understand the meaning of the Amendment, and I should like the right hon. Gentleman to explain its purport in a few words.

Mr. RITCHIE: There may be a parish partly under an urban authority and partly under a rural authority. The Parliamentary Register includes the whole, and the object of this Amendment is to take the Parliamentary Register for the purposes of the Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 12 (Extent of Act).

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I have an Amendment down, the object of which is to extend the operation of the Act to Ireland. As we are pressed for time, perhaps the Government will concede the Amendment at once.

Mr. RITCHIE: I confess the matter has not been considered with reference to Ireland, but perhaps the hon. and gallant Gentleman will accept an assurance from me that between now and the time of Report the Government will consider whether it is for them, without modifications, to extend the operation of the measure to Scotland and Ireland.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I almost hope that this Act will not be extended to Scotland, unless it is greatly altered.

Colonel NOLAN: I am quite willing that the question shall be postponed until Report, but I think we may strike out the words "or Ireland" now. Of course, it is idle for me to go into the reasons why the Bill should be applied to Ireland.

Mr. RITCHIE: It is a mere question of form. What I understand the hon. and gallant Gentleman wishes is that the words "or Ireland" should be struck out, but that that is not to be taken as prejudicing the case as regards Ireland or Scotland. On the part of the Government, I ask the hon. and gallant Gentleman to thoroughly understand that, by omitting these words now, we do in no way agree to the principle of his Amendment.

Colonel NOLAN: I beg to move the omission of the words "or Ireland." I think that the Bill would be far more valuable to Ireland than the Labourers' Act. As the Chairman of a Union in Ireland I have had a great deal to do with the consideration of these matters. Of course, it is quite understood that if the Government assent to my Amendment they are quite free to deal with the question on Report in any way they please.

Amendment proposed, in page 8, line 14, to leave out the words "or Ireland."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'or Ireland' stand part of the Clause."

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): Why not leave out Scotland as well, and so have the whole question considered on Report?

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I hope this Bill may extend to Ireland, and I warmly support the arguments which have been adduced by my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan). I object, however, to the question being postponed until Report; during the course of this debate matter after matter has been put off until the Report stage. What does that mean? It means that hon. Members are to be called together again; there will have to be another whip of hon. Members who are now worn out with fatigue. I really think the right hon. Gentleman who is in charge of this measure ought to be able to make up his mind at once, and tell us whether he will or will not grant what we now demand. We demand that this Bill shall be extended to Ireland, so that if there is any good in it—and I am not prepared to say there is much good in it—the Irish labourers may receive the advantage of it. We claim for the agricultural labourers in Ireland the same advantage you extend to the English agricultural labourers. My hon. and gallant Friend made allusion just now to the working of the Labourers' Act in Ireland, but he did not mention the fact that our labourers, under the Labourers' Act, never get half an acre. I think that what is sauce for the English labourer is sauce for the Irish labourer. I do not, however, rise for the purpose of inflicting a speech upon the Committee. [*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"] Hon. Gentlemen should understand that, up to this, I have not opened my mouth upon this Bill, and that now I am only standing up in the interests of the Irish labourers. I call upon the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to make up his mind at once whether he will extend the operation of this Bill, such as it is, to the Irish labourers.

Mr. RITCHIE: Let me remind the Committee that the question is that the clause which excludes Ireland shall be omitted. The Government accept the omission, having undertaken to consider the whole question before Report. What is being done now is entirely in contradiction of the course suggested by the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Galway.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): Permit me to say one word. There is no intention to talk the Bill out.

Dr. TANNER: I rise to a point of Order. I want to know whether, when my hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan said, he had no intention of talking the Bill out, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) was in Order in saying that my hon. Friend had every intention of doing so.

The CHAIRMAN: I heard no such observation.

Dr. TANNER: It was said so deliberately in my hearing.

Mr. BIGGAR: I not only have no wish to talk this Bill out, but I hope it will not be talked out by anyone else. The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham is at perfect liberty to disbelieve what I say, but I think that my words are entitled to as much credence as his. I hope this Bill will be a workable Bill; whether it will be I do not know. The great misfortune in regard to the Irish Labourers' Cottages Bill, which was passed in one Session and amended in another Session, has been the extraordinary expense in connection with the working of the machinery of that Bill. In addition to that the object of the Labourers' Cottages Bill, which gave half an acre was to build cottages for labourers giving the land in addition. The result of the application of this Bill to Ireland will be that labourers in villages will be enabled to get small patches of land in the neighbourhood of their villages, and that will be of great advantage to these people, because in Ireland the landlord——

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: I rise to Order, Sir. Is it in Order for the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) to discuss the question of the relations between Irish landlords and their tenants on the question whether Ireland shall be retained in the Bill?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for West Cavan would not be in Order in entering upon a general discussion such as that, but I rather imagine the hon. Gentleman is approaching the end of his observations.

Mr. BIGGAR: Let me give an illustration. The land round the town of Castlebar is covered with grass, but there is no accommodation in the shape of town parks or otherwise. Now, if this Bill is extended to Ireland, the residents of Castlebar will be able to get possession of parts of this grass land, and thus be able to rent land for the ordinary purposes of accommodation. The Bill will be of great advantage to Ireland. If it is inoperative, it certainly will do no material harm.

Mr. RITCHIE: Let me make an appeal to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. We have promised to consider the question of Ireland; we desire that this Bill should be passed through Committee to-day in order that it may be reprinted so that we may lay it before the Irish Government, and receive their opinion as to whether there is any objection to its application to Ireland. It is imperative, if it is to be reprinted and submitted to the Irish Executive, that the Committee stage should be finished to-day.

Dr. TANNER: I trust that when the Bill is referred to the Irish Executive the recommendations made to that body will be made not merely in good faith, but that all the power which the right hon. Gentleman is capable of exercising upon the Executive to induce them to extend the benefits of the Bill to the Irish labourers will be brought to bear.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 12, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I should not like anything I have said to be responsible for the retention of this clause. I wish to have a Bill of this kind for Scotland; but I wish to have a good Bill. I believe that a Bill which does not include buildings and gardens will not be a good Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 13 (Definition of county authority).

Amendment proposed,

In page 8, line 18, leave out from "established," to "and," in line 20, and insert "the powers and duties of the county authority under this Act shall be exercised and performed by the Local Government Board, and the provisions of this Act and of the enactments incorporated with this Act shall accordingly be construed with the necessary modification."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words proposed be there inserted," put, *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 14 (Definitions).

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I beg to propose to insert in page 8, after line 24, that "the expression 'allotment' includes a garden." According to the Amendment upon the Paper my intention was to move that "allotment" should also include ground used for pasture, but as that has been already negatived, I wish to omit that part of my Amendment, and simply to move that "allotment" shall include a garden. I have adopted the suggestion of the noble Marquess the Member for the Rossendale Division of Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington) that we should put in words providing that the term "allotment" should include a garden, and I understand the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) is prepared to accept the suggestion. I want, however, to be sure that the word does include a garden. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that it includes field gardens, garden allotments, and other things of that kind, but he has never said it includes a garden. I have seen many field gardens, and all I can say is that, if we do not include *boná fide* gardens which may be contiguous to cottages, we shall make a great mistake.

Amendment proposed, in page 8, after line 24, to insert the words "the expression 'allotment' includes a garden."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. COBB (Warwickshire, S.E., Rugby): I beg to propose to insert, after the word "includes" in line 32, the words "pasture and arable and." I have had some doubt, while the Bill has been going through Committee, whether hon. Members opposite actually mean that the expression "land" really does include pasture. The other night an hon. Member said he hoped some words would be put in to make it clear that "land" does not include meadow land. I think it should include all land. The limitation of the size of allotments to one acre rather presumes that the land should not be pasture land, because one acre of pasture land would be of very little use.

Amendment proposed, in page 8, line 32, after "includes," insert the words "pasture and arable and."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. RITCHIE: The Amendment is quite unnecessary.

MR. COBB: There can be no harm done by the insertion of the words.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): As the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) knows, one of the most frequent difficulties in securing land for allotments under the Allotments Extension Act, 1882, so that the Trustees of the Charity land almost always try to obtain a certificate of urban validity from the Charity Commissioners, on the ground that the land is pasture. I think it is only reasonable the Local Authority should have power.

MR. RITCHIE: I do not think the words are at all necessary, but I have no objection to their insertion.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): It will be impossible to take all the new clauses to-night, and therefore I think it will be well that we should now report Progress.

MR. COBB: I am sure the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) will admit we have done everything we can to get the Bill through. The only object in reprinting the Bill is that it shall be sent to the Irish Authorities. I do not see why we should be debarred from having some discussion upon the new clauses. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to allow us time for their consideration, assuring him, at the same time, that there will be no unreasonably long discussion.

MR. RITCHIE: There are one or two clauses which are not opposed. I think we might put them in and leave the others over.

New Clause—

(Power to make scheme for provision of common pasture.)

"Where it appears to any sanitary authority that, as regards their district, if urban, or any parish in their district, if rural, land can be acquired for affording common pasture at such price or rent that all expenses incurred by the sanitary authority in acquiring the land and otherwise in relation to the land when acquired, may reasonably be expected to be recouped out of the charges paid in respect thereof, and that the acquisition of such land is desirable in view of the wants and circumstances of the labouring population, such sanitary authority may submit to the county authority for the county in which the district or parish is wholly or partly situate a scheme for providing such common pasture, and the county authority, if satisfied of the expediency of such scheme, may by order authorise the sanitary authority to carry it into effect, and upon such order being made this Act shall, with the necessary modifications, apply in like man as if 'allotments' in this Act included common pasture, and 'rent' included a charge for turning out an animal.

"Provided that the regulations made under this Act may extend to regulating the turning out of animals on the common pasture, to defining the persons entitled to turn them out, the number to be turned out, and the conditions under which animals may be turned out, and fixing the charges to be made for each animal, and otherwise to regulating the common pasture,"—(*Mr. Ritchie,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause be read a second time," put, and *agreed to*.

Clause *added* to the Bill.

New Clause—

(Register of tenancies.)

"The sanitary authority shall cause a register to be kept showing the particulars of the tenancy, acreage, and rent of every allotment let, and of the unlet allotments, and such register shall be open to the examination of ratepayers in the urban district or the parish for which the allotments have been provided, in such manner as may be prescribed by the regulations made under this Act by the sanitary authority, and any ratepayer of such district or parish, without paying any fee, may take copies of or extracts from such register," —(*Mr. Ritchie,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause be read a second time," put, and *agreed to*.

Clause *added* to the Bill.

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday* next, and to be *printed*. [Bill 387.]

TRAMWAYS AND PUBLIC COMPANIES (IRELAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Colonel Nolan, Mr. James O'Brien, Mr. Foley, Mr. Shirley.*)

[BILL 252.] COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

COLONEL NOLAN, in moving that the Speaker do leave the Chair, said, he would appeal to his hon. Friend (Mr. Biggar) not to persist in his opposition to the Bill, which materially affected his (Colonel Nolan's) constituents, and those of the hon. Member for South Mayo—inhabitants of Claremorris. The object of the Bill was to remove a technical objection, and really the constituents of the hon. Member for Cavan were no more affected by it than they were by the Suez Canal. It would be a great disappointment to his (Colonel Nolan's) constituents if the Bill did not pass during the Session; and he would ask the hon. Member not to allow his opposition to take the form of blocking the Bill; but let him put it to a Division, and see how the Irish Members voted.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): That is all very well. We would accept the opinion of the Irish Members; but I am afraid we should have English Members interfering in our affairs and influencing the decision. My objection to the Bill is that it contains a principle, concerning the whole of Ireland, which is so obnoxious to me that, under all the circumstances, I shall oppose it. That principle is that money shall be borrowed for the construction of Irish works, Irish property being mortgaged for the value.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Mayo, S.): I claim to move "That the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 80; Noes 13: Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 430.) [5.40 P.M.]

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER declared that the Question was not decided in the affirmative, because it was not supported by the majority prescribed by the Standing Order of the 18th March, 1887.

Original Question again proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned till *Monday* next.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

In reply to Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid),

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) said, it was proposed to take the Constabulary Vote first on Monday, and subsequently the other Irish Votes in the order in which they were set down. He understood that course would be for the convenience of the Irish Members.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 29*th August*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* —CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE, Vote 30

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Local Government Boundaries* [324]; Bankruptcy (Discharge and Closure)* [327].

Committee — Technical Schools (Scotland)* [358]—R.P.

QUESTIONS.

BOARD OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND) — DISMISSAL OF MR. CUNNINGHAM.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the usual course pursued by the Board of National Education in Ireland, in the case of a teacher accused of an offence against the law, is to await the issue of a trial in a Court of Law before dismissing him; and, whether this course was taken with Mr. Cunningham, teacher of Tonragee School, in the Westport District, who has been dismissed for an alleged libel on Mr. Henn, R.M.?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, he was informed that the usual course pursued by the Commissioners of National Education, where a charge admitted of being made the subject of a criminal investigation, was to await the issue of such prosecution. In the case mentioned in the Question, however, there was no such prosecution.

MR. DEASY inquired, if it was a fact that a man who resided in the district attended before the Commissioners and stated that it was he, and not Mr. Cunningham, who wrote the libel?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he was not aware. As he understood it, the libel was contained in a communication to a newspaper; and, on being threatened with proceedings, the proprietors of the paper gave the letter up, when it was found to be in Mr. Cunningham's writing.

POST OFFICE — MEMORIAL OF AUXILIARY POSTMEN.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he has concluded his examination into the facts represented in the Memorial of the auxiliary postmen; and, when he considers he will be able to give an answer to the Memorialists?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Yes, Sir; and I have communicated my answer to the Memorialists.

EXCISE — ADULTERATION OF FOOD AND DRINK—LAW IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether Her Majesty's Government will, in the Recess, examine the laws against the adulteration of food in force in other places, for example, the City of Paris, where, in the case of a first offence, the offender is fined, upon the second offence the premises are temporarily closed and the cause of their being closed nailed upon the door, imprisonment following upon a third offence, with a view, if it be found necessary, of introducing a Bill in the ensuing Session to grant further powers to prevent adulteration of beer?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The Inland Revenue officers do not consider that their powers are insufficient for preventing the adulteration of beer; and as I doubt whether the House of Commons would mould the punishments for offences against the law on the example of the City of Paris, I am not prepared to answer the Question of the hon. Member in the affirmative.

CHINA AND FRANCE—THE NEW COMMERCIAL TREATY—THE PORT OF NAN-NING.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in regard to the new Commercial Treaty between France and China, it is proposed, in conjunction with the other "Treaty Powers," to enter into negotiations with the Imperial Government of China with a view to opening to international commerce of the Port of Nan-Ning, on the upper part of the Canton River?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Minister in China has been instructed to ask the Chinese Government to give such facilities for the navigation by foreign steam vessels of the Canton River and other waterways of Southern China as will enable British trade to compete on fairly equal terms with the trade across the frontier of Tonquin, which has been opened to France by the Commercial Convention of Tien-Tsin.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—THE GOVERNOR OF ARMAGH PRISON—MEMORIAL OF WARDERS.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Governor of Armagh Prison stopped an application addressed by the warders to the Chairman of the General Prisons' Board on the plea that—

> "Any document signed collectively by the staff being contrary to the Regulations, in fact amounting to a breach of discipline;"

whether a like Memorial was forwarded by the staff of Dundalk Prison and other prisons, and the requests granted by the Board; and, whether a complaint has been made by one of the officers of Armagh Prison against the Governor, about the 23rd of July, 1887, for permitting two of his officers to exempt themselves from evening and night duty to parade town from 6 p.m. and on Sundays from 1 o'clock, whilst the remainder of the staff are kept on duty for four consecutive evenings till 10 p.m., and are only off two evenings, from 6.20. one evening and 7 p.m. the second evening, and obliged to do night guards every sixth night?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Governor of Armagh Prison did, on a recent occasion, refuse to send forward a communication signed by the majority of the subordinate officers of his staff, giving the reason stated in the Question, but adding that if the officers submitted applications he would forward them to the Board. The Governor of Dundalk Prison states that at no time has he forwarded such a Memorial; but it has occurred that on former occasions Memorials of this nature have been forwarded from some of the other prisons, and been answered by the Board. It is, however, manifest that in a service such as the Prison Service, where discipline must be strict, anything in the nature of a round robin or collective note from the subordinate staff is highly undesirable. One of the warders of Armagh Prison did make a complaint of the nature referred to, which was duly submitted to the Board, and has been forwarded for inquiry and report to the Inspector, Captain Hill, who will deal with the matter upon his return to duty from leave of absence.

POST OFFICE—SUNDAY NIGHT DESPATCH OF LETTERS.

Mr. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) (for Mr. Lacaita) (Dundee) asked the Postmaster General, Whether, seeing how few people are aware of the facilities for the despatch of letters from London to the Provinces on Sunday night by posting them at the railway stations, he will cause notices giving this information to be posted up in the receiving houses throughout the Metropolis; and, whether he will cause the same information to be clearly given in the index to the quarterly *Post Office Guide?*

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, the arrangements for posting letters on Sundays at railway stations in London were clearly shown in the *Post Office Guide*, at p. 174, and also in the cheaper publication called the *Post Office Handbook*, which could be obtained at any post-office. As he would soon have to consider the whole question of Sunday posting in connection with the Report of the Committee, which has recently sat on the subject, he thought it better to defer for the present his reply to the second part of the hon. Member's Question.

DISPENSARIES (IRELAND) — MEDICAL DISPENSARY DOCTOR OF DRUMQUIN, CO. TYRONE.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Local Government Board have considered the charge of neglect of duty brought by Mr. William Hegarty, of Curraghmacall, against Dr. Corry, Medical Dispensary Doctor of Drumquin, in the Castledery Union, County Tyrone; if he can state the effect of the Report of the Inspector; and, whether the Local Government Board have come to any decision thereupon?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The alleged neglect of duty on the part of the Medical Officer of Health is at present being inquired into by the Local Government Board.

SCOTLAND—WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT—COAL WEIGHING MACHINES—CRAIGHEAD COLLIERY, LANARKSHIRE.

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether a complaint was recently made to him on behalf of the checkweighman and miners at Craighead Colliery, in Lanarkshire, that they suspected the weighing machines at the colliery to be incorrect, and that they had unsuccessfully applied to have them tested by the Local Inspector; whether, in consequence of this complaint, an inspection was ordered which took place on the 21st and 23rd July last; whether three weighing machines were examined and were all found to be incorrect, two of them greatly against the workmen; whether the Chief Constable thereupon lodged an information against the proprietors with the Procurator Fiscal; whether the Procurator Fiscal has taken steps for a prosecution; whether, in this and similar cases in which an inspection takes place at the request of the workmen, he will direct that access to the official Report of the inspection be given to the checkweighman, or some other person representing the workmen; whether an inspection of the weighing machines at the same colliery took place in January or February last showing similar results; whether the Procurator Fiscal then declined to prosecute; and, if so, on what grounds?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Board of Trade that an inspection of three machines was made on the dates given. Each machine was found to be incorrect, two giving results greatly against the workmen, and one in their favour. The Chief Constable lodged an information as stated. I am now making an inquiry of the Fiscal as to the steps he has taken, and, if he did not institute a prosecution, as to his reasons. An official Report is not generally made by the Inspector unless proceedings may have been taken, or unless Local Authorities require a special Report. In either case the official Report is made to the Local Authority, who appoints the Inspector; and neither the Secretary of State nor the Board of Trade has power, under the Weights and Measures Act, to direct access to these Reports. The Board of Trade has no information as to any previous inspection of the weighing machines at this colliery in January or February last. At present, I have only received a telegram from the Fiscal, which throws no light on the matter.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT) — STEEL AND COAL CONTRACTS FOR MANUFACTURING DEPARTMENTS.

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) asked the Surveyor General of Ordnance, Whether, out of 27 firms applied to during 1886-7 for tool steel for the Manufacturing Departments of the Army, out of seven firms applied to for special steel, out of 13 firms applied to for pig iron, out of 11 firms applied to for engineers' machine tools, out of four firms on the list for supply of gas coals, out of seven firms on the list for supply of steam coals, out of 18 firms on the list for supply of Hartley coals, out of four firms on the list for supply of anthracite coals, no firms in Scotland were applied to or were on the list; whether, out of 17 firms applied to for bar iron, only one Scottish firm, and whether, out of 27 firms applied to for machine tools, only two Scottish firms were applied to; and, whether, considering the importance and dimensions of the coal, iron, and steel trades in Scotland, he will consider the propriety of giving to Scottish traders a more adequate share of the custom of the Department?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter): The facts are as stated in the Question. As regards the classes of coal specified, those at present obtained are considered, both as regards price and quality, to be preferable to the Scotch coal. With reference to the other supplies named, there is no wish to discriminate against Scotland, and any Scotch firm desirous of tendering should apply to the Director of Army Contracts. It must, however, be remembered that the supplies have, for the most part, to be delivered at Woolwich; and distance tells in prices of articles as to which there is keen competition.

WAR OFFICE—HEAVY GUN PRACTICE FROM TYNEMOUTH CASTLE.

Mr. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he is aware that it has recently become a practice to fire very large guns from Tynemouth Castle, thereby causing great nuisance to the inhabitants of Tynemouth, as well as serious damage to the fine ruin of Tynemouth Priory, and other property; and, whether he will make arrangements to discontinue it?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Tynemouth Castle has been a coast defence work for at least three centuries; and if the mouth of the Tyne is to be defended it is absolutely necessary that heavy guns should be mounted on the site. Early in this year opportunity was taken of the emplacements to test the mountings by firing 50 rounds from a 9·2-inch breech-loading gun, and it is intended shortly to fire the same number from another gun. I am not aware of any damage to the ruins of Tynemouth Priory; but I understand that some modern glass not of great value was broken in the Lady Chapel. Such an accident can, I understand, be easily guarded against in future.

Mr. JOICEY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the guns were only sent there to be tested; that great annoyance was given to the inhabitants; and that deaths of invalids had been caused?

Mr. E. STANHOPE said, that as little inconvenience as possible was caused. He feared guns must be tested somewhere.

IRELAND—ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY—GRANT FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF HORSE BREEDING.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the grant to the Dublin Society for the improvement of horse breeding, How is it proposed to select the farmers who are to have the benefit of the grant; whether he is aware that the Society is controlled entirely by landlords; and, what precautions have been taken for securing to Nationalists and members of the League their fair proportion of the grant?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The administration of the grant for horse and cattle breeding in Ireland has been left by the Government in the hands of the Royal Dublin Society, in whose impartiality they have entire confidence. The selection of the farmers who are to have the benefit will be left to the Local Committees. Nominations are restricted to tenant farmers of, or under, £200 valuation. It will be an instruction to each Local Committee to give a preference, *ceteris paribus*, to the smaller holders. The tenant-farming class will be represented on the Local Committees; and I have no reason to suppose that political considerations will enter into the matter in any way.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) said, the prizes had been already allocated by the Royal Dublin Society; and, considering the rapidity with which the awards had been made, it would be impossible for them to consult the Local Committees.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he was not aware of the facts mentioned; but he would make inquiries. This Question, he might remark, should rather be addressed to the Irish Government, matters of finance only coming under his cognizance.

Mr. M. J. KENNY said, he would call attention to the matter on the Irish Estimates.

In reply to Mr. Cox (Clare, E.),

Mr. GOSCHEN said, all the tenant farmers of Ireland would have a chance of benefiting under this scheme.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he understood that the horses had already been selected. He wished to ask the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, who, he understood, was a member of the Council of the Royal Dublin Society, who would nominate the Local Committees?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) said, the allocation was made at the Horse Show; and in respect to the question about the Committees, he must ask the hon. Gentleman to give Notice.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman be able to answer the matter soon? because I presume the Estimates will be on this week.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I will make inquiries at once.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THE TAAFE ESTATE, CO. MAYO.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many eviction notices have been served on the Taafe Estate, County Mayo; how many evictions have taken place there; were all these evictions sanctioned and directed by the Court of Chancery; was this the estate which the Land Purchase Commissioners refused to sanction a purchase of by the tenants, who were all willing to buy; was the ground of refusal that the rent was not made out of the land, but by the wages of labour in England; did any member of the Executive, before granting police for these evictions, examine the published recommendations of the Receiver advising the clearance of entire townlands on the ground that the tenants were "paupers;" and, would it be within the province of the Government to communicate with the Judge of the Chancery Court, with a view to prevent sufferings brought on by poverty alone?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: I understand that 26 notices of eviction were served on the Taafe estate. Of these, five were carried out, and the tenants re-admitted as caretakers. All the evictions seem to have been sanctioned by the Court of Chancery. The Land Commissioners refused to purchase this estate on the ground that, having regard to the quality of the land, the sub-division of the holdings, and the fact that a large number of the tenants were of the class of migratory labourers, they were not satisfied that a re-sale could be effected without loss to the public. I cannot find that there are any published recommendations of the Receiver recommending the clearance of town lands on the ground alleged. It would not be within the province of the Government to make any representations to a Judge in regard to the discharge of his judicial functions.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman have any objection to say whether he has in any way looked at the Receiver's account? because I have seen it myself, and have also seen it published, recommending these clearances on the ground that they were paupers.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I have not been able to find that; but I will make inquiries.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — RETIREMENT OF RESIDENT MAGISTRATES.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, How many Resident Magistrates it is proposed to retire; how many were retired upon the passing of the Crimes Act of 1882; how many appointments were made in consequence of the passing of the latter Act; how many who now hold office have seven years' experience; how many there are altogether; how many of those now to be retired are Catholics; and, what is the religion of the remainder?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Five Resident Magistrates have lately been retired. It is not now proposed to retire any others. On the passing of the Crimes Act of 1882, 16 Resident Magistrates were retired and 18 new appointments made. There are at present 77 Resident Magistrates, 37 of whom have seven years' service and upwards as Resident Magistrates. Of the five Resident Magistrates retired, three are Roman Catholics and two are Protestants.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman reply to the last paragraph of the Question?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I have no information as to the religion of the remainder.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) (TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT)—PROMOTION OF MR. SAMUEL GRAHAM.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the Inspecting Telegraphist of the Northern Division of Ireland, Mr. Samuel Graham, has been promoted over the heads of many clerks of similar rank of long service who are still awaiting promotion; whether the promotion was made on the recommendation of Mr. H. J. Sheppard, the Postmaster of Belfast; whether Graham holds his present position permanently, or only temporarily; and, if there be any objection to permit an inspection of the official Papers involved in this case?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The hon. Member is misinformed. In the recent promotions at Belfast I did not promote Mr. Samuel Graham, whose present position as Inspecting Telegraphist is not a permanent one.

CIVIL LIST PENSIONS—MR. MONGREDIEN AND MR. RICHARD JEFFERIES.

MR. JENNINGS (Stockport) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he can state for what distinguished literary services a pension of £100 a-year was granted to Mr. Mongredien, and what permanent and valuable contributions to English literature that gentleman has made; and, whether he is able to throw any light upon the principle on which £100 a-year was given to Mr. Mongredien, while an eminent and a popular writer, the late Mr. Richard Jefferies, was allowed to die in indigence?

MR. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the pension referred to was not granted to Mr. Mongredien by a previous Government; and whether it had been the practice of this House, or was competent to a Government, to review pensions granted by a previous Government to which the gracious assent of the Queen had been obtained?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) (who replied) said: The pension to which my hon. Friend (Mr. Jennings) calls attention was granted by a former Government. I have no information of the grounds on which it was granted. If my hon. Friend is not satisfied with the particulars given in the Parliamentary Return he should ask the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) for fuller information about Mr. Mongredien's literary services. The claim of Mr. Richard Jefferies to one of these pensions was first brought before me in April last; and as the financial year of these pensions ends on the 20th of June, the balance at my disposal was too small to meet many sad claims to which my attention has been drawn. I have, however, continued Mrs. Jefferies' name on the list of applicants, and her claims shall receive my most careful consideration.

SCOTLAND—THE CROFTERS COMMISSION — RETURN OF DECISIONS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he will place upon the Table of the House a Return, giving the decisions of the Crofters Commission up till June 30, in the form hung out at the doors of Sheriff Courts, together with the number of cases where additional land has been added to the crofters' holdings, with or without the consent of the landlords?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The Crofters Commission will be glad to furnish a Return as soon as possible, giving their decisions up to and including June. But I must inform the hon. Member that there are no Returns of decisions hung out at the doors of the Sheriff Courts. Only one case of application for enlargement of holdings has been disposed of.

PUBLIC HEALTH—BRITISH MEDICAL TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received a Memorial from Dr. B. W. Richardson and Dr. Ridge, on behalf of the British Medical Temperance Association, stating that one-tenth of the mortality is due to the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and praying for an official inquiry into the matter; and, whether he intends to do anything in reference to this matter?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received the Memorial alluded to in the hon. Member's Question. The Memorial prays for an inquiry, which shall confirm or disprove the pernicious effects of alcoholic drinks on the national vitality. The Government have no reason to suppose that a fresh inquiry would add anything to the conclusions arrived at by the Select Committee of the House of

Lords on intemperance, which reported in March, 1879, that there did not appear to be any theory as to the physiological properties of alcohol so generally accepted by the Medical Profession as to warrant its being adopted as a basis for legislation.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—A HARBOUR OF REFUGE ON THE EAST COAST.

MR. W. J. CORBET (Wicklow, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If the Government propose to construct a Harbour of Refuge on the East Coast of Ireland; and, if so, where?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square) (who replied) said: I am not aware of any intention such as that expressed in the Question of the hon. Member.

EXCISE—MR. FOLEY, LESSEE OF THE CORK CUSTOM HOUSE.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) (for Mr. P. M'DONALD) (Sligo, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether Mr. Foley, Lessee of the Cork Custom House, is allowed, contrary to the Code, to keep a stock of duty-paid spirits in proximity to the vaults in which wines and spirits are bonded, only a partition wall dividing the two, and Mr. Foley's portion not being accessible to the officers; whether Mr. Foley took his licence out from the Excise for Merchants' Quay, although his duty-paid stock is kept in his stores in the Customs House, divided only by the above-mentioned partition wall from the Bonded Department; and, whether it is a fact that the principal traders have notified the Collector at Cork, in writing, of their intention to remove at once their goods to an Excise warehouse?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Mr. Foley has a stock of duty-paid spirits in a compartment of the warehouse adjoining one in which bonded wines and spirits are kept; but the compartments are separated by a wall three feet thick in its thinnest part. This proximity is contrary to the provisions of the Code; but the warehouse is a Crown building; and, under the circumstances, it is considered that the Revenue is safe, although a portion of the wall on Mr. Foley's side is not at all times accessible to the officers. Mr. Foley is licensed by the Excise as a spirit dealer at Merchants' Quay. Some of the principal traders have notified to the Collector at Cork that if Mr. Foley is allowed to continue to deal as a wholesale dealer they will remove their stock from the Customs warehouse to an Excise warehouse. There is no objection, from the point of view of the Revenue, to such removal; and I hope it may not cause inconvenience to the traders.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—MEDICAL RANK.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, with reference to the statement of Sir Thomas Crawford, Director General of the Army Medical Department, before the Select Committee on the Army and Navy Estimates, 10th July, the command of the Army Staff Corps, Military Hospitals, and patients is now held by military surgeons, and they have commissioned and non-commissioned officers serving under their command; whether, in the American, Italian, Swiss, Egyptian, and other Armies, surgeons have real or substantive rank, and that this system has resulted in great advantage to these Armies, the American Surgeon General having lately reported—

> "No difficulty whatever, either in theory or in practice, has arisen from the fact that medical officers have real rank. It is an undoubted fact that the law giving medical officers the same military status as other officers has done much to enhance *esprit de corps*, and to increase the efficiency of the Army Medical Service;"

and, whether, considering the present condition of the Army Medical Service, he will appoint a Departmental Committee to consider the question of the rank of military surgeons during the Recess?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Medical officers do exercise command, as stated in the Question. They do so, and always have done so, in virtue of the commissions, as medical officers, which expressly confer command. The relative rank formerly held by them conferred no power of command whatever. In some Foreign Armies medical officers do hold titular combatant rank. But, as I said on the 12th May last, I cannot consider that the titles peculiar to their honourable Profession would be enhanced in dignity or value by the addition or substitution of combatant denominations. I do not think any useful purpose would be served by the appointment of a Committee.

Dr. CLARK said, that the Question on the Notice Paper was not the Question which he sent into the clerk; and the statement made was not with regard to rank, but to the cause which prevented the Medical Service from being recruited under the same circumstances as now. The Question did not ask for the information which he wanted, and therefore the answer did not satisfy him.

MOROCCO—IMPRISONMENT OF THE FREED NEGRO FATAH.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) (for Mr. A. E. Pease) (York) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that the freed negro Fatah, who was originally brought to Morocco on board a British vessel, and who, therefore, claims British protection, is still in prison as a slave at Tangier; whether Sir W. Kirby Green, on his recent visit to the Sultan of Morocco, made any attempt to obtain his release; and, if not, can he state for what reason; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will instruct the Minister at Tangier to take steps to procure the release of Fatah?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): Fatah, so far as Her Majesty's Government know, is still a prisoner. Sir W. Kirby Green did not lose sight of the case on his recent visit to Morocco, and it still engages his attention. The man is not entitled to British protection, and it is very inexpedient to extend the practice of foreign protection to Moorish subjects. The hon. Member is, no doubt, conscious that Her Majesty's Government cannot interfere officially with the domestic institutions of foreign countries which differ from our own.

STREET TRAFFIC (METROPOLIS)—PRIVATE BARS AND GATES.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, How many private bars and gates there are within the Metropolitan area; whether they are opened at any period of the year; and, if so, for how long, and under what restrictions; and, whether the Local Boards or the Metropolitan Board of Works intend to take any further action in the matter?

Mr. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said that the Return made by the Metropolitan Board of Works showed that there were 150 private bars and gates within the Metropolitan area. The Board were unable to state the conditions by which these bars and gates existed. In 1886 the Board inserted clauses in a Bill before Parliament to enable them to deal, under certain conditions, with some of those private bars and gates that were most obstructive; but they met with so much opposition, both inside and outside the House, that they were obliged to withdraw the clauses, and they did not see their way to renew the attempt.

BOARD OF TRADE (RAILWAY DEPARTMENT)—NORTH LONDON RAILWAY—CHALK FARM ROAD BRIDGE.

Mr. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that there is no improvement in the condition of the North London Railway Bridge in the Chalk Farm Road, N.W.; what was the result of his inquiries, and what action the Board of Trade has taken; and, whether he is aware of the constant complaints by those persons who live in the neighbourhood of this railway bridge, and others, of the nuisance and injury inflicted in this way; and, if it is possible to ensure reasonable provision for diminishing the perpetual noise and rumbling?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Board of Trade are not aware that the bridge referred to is in an unsatisfactory condition so far as the railway traffic is concerned; and they have no statutory power to take any action with regard to the noise or inconvenience that is alleged to be occasioned by the passing of traffic over railway structures. As the hon. Member is aware, the Board of Trade communicated with the Railway Company last year, and their reply was seen by him. The Board of Trade have again communicated with the Company, who state that the Directors have under consideration the possibility of adopting certain modifications in the construction of the bridge, in the hope that the sound of passing trains may be diminished.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS) — CHELSEA HOSPITAL REFUSE AT SHEERNESS.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that for two months past barges have been discharging their contents, consisting of hospital refuse from Chelsea, about one mile from the shore at Sheerness, and that, as a result, the refuse has been washed up in considerable quantities upon the beach, to the inconvenience of visitors, and the injury of the town both as to health and business; whether, about a month ago, the Local Board of Health made representations on the subject to the Board of Trade; and, whether any steps have as yet been taken to abate the nuisance; and, if not, whether he will at once direct inquiry to be made into the matter?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Representations on the subject of the alleged nuisance referred to by the hon. Member have been made to the Board of Trade by the Local Board of Sheerness and other Local Bodies. The Board of Trade have only power to interfere in the matter in so far as the question of interference with the navigation is concerned, and on this point they are now in communication with the Conservators of the River Thames. The Board have also forwarded copies of the Papers to the Local Government Board in connection with the question as affecting the public health.

ADMIRALTY—BERMUDA DOCK.

Sir EDMUND COMMERELL (Southampton) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, The original cost of Bermuda Dock, including expenses of delivery there; and the yearly cost of maintenance, including expenses of careening every three years; and if it is apprehended this cost will be increased from the difficulty of obtaining Native labour?

Lord CHARLES BERESFORD (A Lord of the Admiralty) (Marylebone, E.) (who replied) said: The floating dock, with its caissons complete, cost £247,589 5*s.* 7*d.*, delivered afloat in the Thames. The dock was towed to Bermuda by certain of Her Majesty's ships during the summer of 1869. The charge of the dock was transferred from this Department to that of the Controller of the Navy in 1877; and the cost of maintenance for the last 10 years was £69,980 18*s.* 5*d.*, the average per year being £6,998 1*s.* 10*d.*

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — THE RIVERSTOWN (CO. CORK) PETTY SESSIONS CLERK.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that Mr. T. W. Lendrum, of Riverstown, County Cork, holds the position of Assistant County Surveyor, and of Clerk to the Riverstown Petty Sessions District; and, whether the tenant of a Petty Sessions clerkship is entitled to take any other official position of emolument?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, his answer to the first part of the Question was in the affirmative. Petty Sessions clerks were permitted to hold other official appointments, provided they were not positions which were prohibited by Statute, or prohibited by the Lord Lieutenant. The position of Assistant County Surveyor did not come within the prohibition.

WALES — THE TITHE AGITATION — ATTACK ON THE RESIDENCE OF THE REV. CANON BROWNE, BODFARI.

Mr. SWETENHAM (Carnarvon, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received any information as to the alleged anti-tithe outrage thus reported in *The Liverpool Courier* of the 25th August—

> "An outrage was perpetrated at the residence of the Rev. Canon Browne, of Bodfari, a village four miles from Denbigh, on Monday, at midnight, by a gang of men who smashed all the glass of the front windows of the rectory and broke the framework into matchwood. The reverend gentleman has called upon Police Superintendent Vaughan for police protection, as he believes that his life is in danger;"

if so, whether there is any clue to the offenders; and, whether Canon Browne was a witness called before Mr. Bridge during his inquiry into the Anti-Tith Riots?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a Report from the Chief Constable of Flintshire, who informs me that an attack was made on Canon Browne's house on the night of the 22nd. Several panes of glass were broken, the window frames and sashes damaged, and large stones hurled through an upper window into Canon Browne's bedroom. The police are investigating the case, and believe that they have some clue to the offenders. Canon Browne has not applied for police protection. He was called as a witness before Mr. Bridge.

WAR OFFICE — INTERFERENCE OF OFFICERS IN PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.

MR. CHILDERS (Edinburgh, S.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the effect of his decision, announced to the House on Friday last, will be that officers, under the present wide permission to wear plain clothes, may canvass, and bring to the poll, electors, whether soldiers or civilians, at the places where such officers are stationed; whether this decision confers on officers a privilege denied to non-commissioned officers and privates, who are never allowed to wear plain clothes; and, if he will reconsider his decision, and either restrict the permission to officers to wear plain clothes during an election at the places where they are stationed, or, in some other way, place officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates under the same restrictions, and on the same footing, as to canvassing?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The decision to which the right hon. Gentleman refers was simply an announcement on my part that I did not propose to alter the Regulations which have hitherto been in force on this subject. The Rule is precisely the same as it was when the right hon. Gentleman was Secretary of State. But I will consider whether any change is required in order to carry out the objects of the Queen's Regulations.

MR. CHILDERS: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that soldiers have been admitted to the franchise in large numbers since I was Secretary of State for War?

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—GENERAL POST OFFICE, DUBLIN — ANNUAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) (for Sir THOMAS ESMONDE) (Dublin Co., S.) asked the Postmaster General, If any decision has been arrived at with regard to the annual leave of absence to overseers in the General Post Office, Dublin?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): Yes, Sir; the overseers in the General Post Office, Dublin, and elsewhere will continue to have three weeks' leave of absence.

EGYPT — THE PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS—DELAY IN ISSUING.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, in "Egypt (No. 9)," issued last week, the last Despatch is dated 7th February, 1887; what was the cause of the long delay in issuing these Papers; whether "Egypt (No. 4)," 1886, containing Papers on the Finances of Egypt to the 8th May, 1886, was not presented in the month of June, 1886; and, why the corresponding Papers for the present year have not yet been presented?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The Papers contained in "Egypt (No. 9)" are not part of the regular series of Financial Despatches; but a separate Correspondence, relating to the claims for military expenditure. They go back a considerable distance of time, and belong to different Departments; and although they are not very bulky, their collection and preparation in a clear shape was not an easy task. They were also delayed in order to produce other Papers respecting Sir Henry Drummond Wolff's Mission, &c., which were considered to be more pressing. The Financial Papers about to be distributed will contain Correspondence down to the end of April. The Financial Blue Book "Egypt (No. 4,)" 1886, was laid on the Table on the 24th of June, but was not delivered till the 20th of September. In cases of urgency the telegraph is employed in referring the Papers to our Missions abroad; but where there is no necessity for this, and the proofs are sent by messenger or post, a longer delay must occur in the preparation of a Blue Book of any bulk.

Mr. DILLON said, that the difference between the telegraph and the post would not extend to several months. He wished to know when they might expect to have the Papers dealing with the finances of Egypt for this year, corresponding to those that were laid on the Table last year in the month of June?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON pointed out that the delay had arisen from the change of Government in 1886. The Papers, however, were very nearly ready, and would be distributed before the end of the Session.

DOMINION OF CANADA—THE MANITOBA RAILWAY.

Sir HENRY TYLER (Great Yarmouth) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has now received from the Marquess of Lansdowne the information for which he had telegraphed on the subject of the Manitoba Railway from Winnipeg to the frontier, and the action of the Dominion Government in relation to that railway?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Henry Holland) (Hampstead): I think that the best answer I can give the hon. Member will be to read a telegram which I received from the Marquess of Lansdowne on Friday evening. It is as follows:—

> "Your telegram of the 24th. Have ascertained that the statement is a pure fabrication."

That refers to the words alleged to have been uttered by Sir John Macdonald.

> "Provincial Act for construction of Red River Valley Railway was disallowed by me on the advice of my responsible advisers, on ground that line would tap traffic of the Canadian Pacific Railway not yet fully established or developed, and thereby seriously injure commercial interests of the whole country, which has submitted to large sacrifices in order to unite the Provinces by national road. This question was discussed at great length by the new Parliament in May of this year, and Government policy supported by large majority. Provincial Government is proceeding with the line under Public Works Act. Injunction has been obtained in interests of the Canadian Pacific Railway; but my Government has not interfered except by disallowance. Despatch follows by mail."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Does the statement that the Report of Sir John Macdonald's remarks is a fabrication, extend to the report that Winnipeg was to be the place of concentration of the Imperial forces?

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: I have never heard of that last statement; but I am just now assured by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War that it is a pure fabrication.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—ARREST AND TRIAL OF MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN, M.P.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what principle the two Resident Magistrates who will try Mr. William O'Brien, M.P., will be selected by the Government; and, when can their names be announced?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The case alluded to in this Question will be tried by the Resident Magistrates in the usual way. It is impossible at present to say who will be free to attend, nor is it customary to announce beforehand the names of magistrates who are to try a case.

Mr. DILLON: What does the right hon. and gallant Gentleman mean by "the usual way?" This is a new Act of Parliament, and there is nothing usual in it at all.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: It will be tried in conformity with the Act.

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—PRINCIPAL SHERIFFS, PROCURATORS FISCAL, &c.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If Government, during the Recess, will call upon the Secretary for Scotland to prepare a Report for presentation to Parliament on the course hitherto followed for filling up the offices of Principal Sheriffs, as to the parties appointed, their qualifications, by whom selected, and how far these offices have been filled up from the ranks of Sheriffs' Substitutes, and finally as to arrangements of the future; as to forming the Procurators Fiscal into Government officers, the expenditure which will be needed, the age and examinations for the office, and the system of promotion and selection in the future; and, to report upon the ranks of Sheriff Clerk and

Commissary Clerk, and generally as to the improvements and economies which can be effected in the establishment of these offices, and how their duties can be usefully extended?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I think the hon. and gallant Gentleman is not aware of the fact that a Royal Commission investigated the whole of this question very recently—in 1871. Therefore, the necessity he suggests in the Question does not arise.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

SIR RICHARD PAGET (Somerset, Wells) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he would be good enough to direct that copies of the various Bills introduced during the present Session, dealing with the important subject of Technical Education in connection with Elementary Schools, be sent to the Royal Commission on the Elementary Education Acts, and that any Amendments to such Bills, of which Notice has been given, be similarly sent at the same time?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Royal Commission has power to send for such Papers as they may deem needful for the purposes of their inquiry; and no such action as that suggested by the hon. Member is necessary on my part.

PARLIAMENTARY PRINTING — CONTRACTS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the printing for this House is done by contract; if he is aware of the constant delays in the printing of Bills, Acts, and Returns, which cause so much inconvenience to Members; when the contract with Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode will expire; and, will the Treasury consider whether the next tenders should not require regard to be had to despatch and punctuality, with a penalty for unworkmanlike delays?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The printing for this House is done under contracts, that for Bills and Acts by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode and that for Returns by Messrs. Hansard. Messrs Eyre and Spottiswoode's contract will expire on the 31st of December, 1896, unless previously terminated by 12 months' notice at any time after December 31 next. No complaint has been received at the Stationery Office of delays in the printing of Bills, Acts, or Returns; and Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode state that they are working almost every night in order to get the Bills and Acts out promptly. All Acts have to be examined by the officers of the House of Lords before Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode are at liberty to go to press. Condition 7 of the contract provides a penalty for undue delay. If a Member makes a complaint of delay to the proper officer of the House it ought to be transmitted to the Stationery Office. I acknowledge that the hon. and learned Member has complained, within the last two or three days, of the non-publication of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, and there was a former complaint with respect to the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; but with these two exceptions there have been no complaints. It is very necessary that great care should be exercised by the proper officers of the House in correcting the proofs of Acts of Parliament, and that involves delay which cannot be avoided.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked to whom complaints ought to be made by Members? Not long ago it took nearly a month to have a Return printed which he had moved for.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he was not able to say whom complaints ought to be made to; but he would make inquiries.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, At what hour he proposed to report Progress that evening on the Civil Service Estimates; and whether he would do so at an early hour in order that the Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill and the Secretary for Scotland Act (1885) Amendment Bill, both of which would involve considerable discussion, might be proceeded with?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): said, that he was under the impression, from the information which had reached him, that the Technical Schools Bill would not occasion any very long discussion that evening. He was informed that it was generally accepted by hon. Members from Scotland—["No!"]—and that they were desirous of passing it. He might say at once that it would be impossible to report Progress at an early hour. They ought to continue in Committee as long as hon. Members could be fairly asked to do so. Looking at the period of the Session, and the amount of Business to be got through, they ought to continue up to half-past 1 o'clock. If, therefore, it was desired by Scotch Members that the Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill should not be taken that night. [*Cries of* "Yes!" *and* "No!"] Judging from those expressions, he thought that they had better proceed with the Bill.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, as the Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill and the Secretary for Scotland Act (1885) Amendment Bill would involve considerable discussion, and as a large section of Scotch Members objected to Scotch Bills being brought on for discussion at 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, and as other Members would come to the House at that hour mainly for the purpose of preventing any attempt to carry on discussion, he would postpone those two Orders until the Irish Estimates had been got rid of or abandoned altogether for the Session, which would be the most convenient course to take?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that he had great difficulty in ascertaining what the views of Scotch Members really were. Representations had been made to him that it would be for the convenience of Members from Scotland that the Bills should be taken that evening. [MR. E. ROBERTSON: No.] He thought, under the circumstances, that the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Robertson) must bow to the views of his Colleagues. He did not wish to force the Committee to proceed with the Technical Schools Bill at a late hour; but if it was the wish of Scotch Members that it should be taken he should not be justified in withdrawing it from their consideration.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn) asked, whether the Government proposed to proceed with the Local Government Boundaries Bill that night; and what object the Government had in not extending the provisions of the Bill to Scotland?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he had already stated that it would require a separate Bill for Scotland; and, looking to the late period of the Session, he thought it would not be deemed advisable to bring in a Bill for Scotland this year. The provisions for Scotland were different to those required for England. It was intended to bring the Bill in early next Session, and this would enable the Government to get the Report of the Commission before they dealt with local government for Scotland. The English Bill would take precedence of the Scotch measure.

MR. ANDERSON asked, whether it was the intention of the Government to bring in a Local Government Bill for Scotland next Session?

MR. W. H. SMITH: There will be a Bill next Session.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) asked, whether the Report stage of the Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Bill would be taken on Thursday or Friday this week?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that he was under an engagement not to take it this week. He could not take it until Supply was much further advanced.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he had yet made up his mind as to what course the Irish Government intended to take with regard to the Distressed Unions (Ireland) Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had now been fully informed for three weeks as to the course the Irish Members intended to pursue; and it was necessary they should have some intimation as to what action the Government proposed to take?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said, he was not prepared to deny that this was a matter of urgent importance, and if it were so it would be the best thing for the hon. Member to withdraw his block and opposition. He had already stated that he regarded the Bill as one of importance. It was impossible at that period of the Session to carry that or any other Bill if there was a prolonged opposition, and the responsibility must rest with those who desired to oppose it.

MR. DILLON said, the matter with which the Bill proposed to deal was one of urgent importance; but he had been urged to block the Bill by all the Unions interested in the matter; therefore he had no option. The question he wished to ask the Chief Secretary was this—

under these circumstances, regarding the Bill as a dead Bill, what did the Irish Government propose to do?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I have no alternative policy to offer.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) wished to know what arrangement the Government intended to make to proceed with Order No. 6, the Municipal Regulation (Constabulary, &c.) (Belfast) Bill, the urgency for which was declared by the Chief Secretary last March?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I must give a similar answer to this Question as I have already given to that of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) with reference to the Distressed Unions (Ireland) Bill. As I have before said, I regard both these Bills as important. Neither of them, however, can be passed through in face of strong or persistent opposition in the House.

Mr. SEXTON wished to obtain definitely from the right hon. Gentleman what he intended to do in the matter. Did he intend to allow the Session to expire without an attempt to defeat the block; or would he consent to report Progress on some other Bill at half-past 12 o'clock in order that this Bill could be passed into law?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, if it were deemed advisable to stop any of the Business at half-past 12 o'clock in order to pass any Irish Bill, he should give the preference to the Distressed Unions (Ireland) Bill.

Mr. SEXTON: I shall take the earliest opportunity I can of calling attention to the conduct of the Government on this question, and I shall take that opportunity to-night on the Police Vote, so far as concerns Belfast.

QUESTIONS—IRREGULARITY OF PRACTICE.

Mr. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) said, he wished to ask the Home Secretary, Whether, from the information he had received on the subject of the anti-tithe agitation, there was any reason whatever for——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must call the attention of the House to the practice which is springing up, after Questions have been gone through, and even after they have been gone through a second time, and after all supplementary inquiries have been put, of hon. Gentlemen rising to refer to the answers given by Ministers. This gives rise to great confusion, and I hope the House will not sanction the practice.

LAW OF EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked, with reference to the Law of Evidence Amendment Bill, Whether the Government intended to keep it still on the Paper, and keep Members in attendance for it?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, he did not think this Bill would cause any prolonged opposition. Opposition would be offered in a very small quarter of the House. The Bill was received with almost universal favour; and he conceived that it would be his duty to endeavour to pass it in the present Session.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he had a number of Amendments to the Bill; and if necessary he would wait till the end of the Session if the Bill was to be proceeded with.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class III.—Law and Justice.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £762,315, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Expenses of the Constabulary Force, Ireland."

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Mr. Courtney, we are now asked to complete the sum of £1,412,000 to pay for the Irish Constabulary. Now, Sir, on the 26th of August, 1880, when the Irish Constabulary Vote came before Parliament, I and several other Members of the then National Party of Ireland protested against the habitual increase and the enormous character of this Vote. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the senior Member for Birmingham (Mr. John Bright), who was then more in sympathy with Ireland than, I regret to say, he has since shown himself to be, made use of these words. Speaking just after I had sat down, he said—

> "I think the speeches generally of the Irish Members have been of a character to produce an influence upon the Members of this House, and I hope they may have some effect upon the opinion of the Members of another House also. I should be glad to think that a report of them will be extensively read throughout the country, for the purpose of giving information upon many points to the people of England, which probably the great bulk of them do not possess."

The question under discussion was the enormous size and the growth of the Irish Constabulary Vote, and the right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "The protest which they have made is a reasonable one, and the time may come—I hope it may come soon—when the police system of Ireland may be placed on a footing as judicious and conformable to our notions of freedom as the police systems of England and Scotland."—(3 *Hansard*, [256] 181-2.)

Now, Sir, those words were used in 1880, and therefore since they were uttered seven years have elapsed. And what do we find? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham felt that the time would soon come when the police system of Ireland would be based upon a system more conformable to English ideas. Now, Sir, what has occurred in the interval? In the year 1880 the sum voted for the Irish Police was £1,134,000, and in the interval you have increased it by an amount of nearly £280,000 a-year. More than £250,000 has been added to the expenses of the Irish Police, and this in face of a decrease of nearly 200,000 in the population of Ireland. I would like to know, with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham, when the time is to come when the Irish Constabulary will be conformable either to English ideas of freedom or to any rational man's idea of common sense? It cannot be too often repeated that the Irish Constabulary is a military force; it constitutes an evasion of the Mutiny Act; it is armed, disciplined, and officered, not as a police force, but as a military force. The consequence of the system is that both officers and men are too great swells to concern themselves with the punishment or repression of crime. They conceive that their duties belong to the far higher sphere of politics, and to that they devote themselves instead of crime. I would ask the Committee to consider what has been the history of this frightful growth of the Irish Constabulary. The condition of things is one absolutely and utterly without precedent in the civilized world. In 1859-60 the Irish Constabulary cost this country £700,000, and at that time the population of Ireland amounted to 6,000,000. In 1860-1 the cost was £707,000; in 1869-70 it was £911,000; in 1870-1 it was £913,000; in 1880-1 it was £1,134,000; in 1886-7 it was £1,396,000; and in 1887-8 it is £1,412,000. In order to estimate and to appreciate the full meaning of these figures, we must remember that whereas in the year 1859-60, when it cost £700,000 to police the Irish people, you had to deal with a population of over 6,000,000, in the present year, when you are called upon to provide £1,412,000 for the purpose, you have to deal with a population of only 4,750,000. In order to get at the full meaning of the figures, we must deduct one-fourth from the £700,000, so as to obtain the proper proportion of cost in comparing the statistics of the two years. If we do this we find that the proportionate cost amounted to £525,000 in 1859-60, as compared with £1,412,000 in the present year—that is to say, that, making allowance for the decrease in population, the cost of the Irish Constabulary has all but trebled in the 28 years. That is the condition of things which we are called upon to face in regard to this Vote; and what makes it all the more serious is that, in spite of the repeated criticisms which have been levelled against the system for the last seven years, and in spite of the promises of Ministers, the Vote has grown steadily year by year, and there is not the slightest prospect that it will cease to grow. If we look at the figures from another point of view, we shall find that, whereas in 1859-60 the Irish Constabulary cost 2*s.* 4*d.* per head of the population, this year it costs 7*s.* per head. I want to ask when this is going to stop? Before I sit down I shall show that this ruinous and atrocious waste of the public money is not due to crime, because the general criminal statistics of Ireland prove that the people of that country are less criminal than the people of England and Scotland. And this is not alone the case, for in those districts in Ireland in which there is most crime the police expenses are lighter than in districts where there is the least crime. This is a state of things which no Government in the world except an Irish Government would tolerate. It is because they are supported by Englishmen and Scotchmen, who have not time to look into these matters, that the Government are practically irresponsible, and can indulge in corruption and waste without being called upon to account for it. Let me just compare the condition of things in England with that in Scotland under this head. In England the police are divided into three classes—namely, the Borough Police, the County Police, and the Metropolitan Police. The Borough Police cost £910,000, the County Police £1,207,000, and the Metropolitan Police £1,424,000. Here you have the great City of London, actually the largest and richest city in the whole world, with a population coming within 500,000 of the population of all Ireland, and, although Ireland has an almost purely rural population, you find that the police of Ireland, including those of the City of Dublin, cost more than the police of the City of London. It is really the most absurd thing that ever was heard of. The cost of policing the whole of England, excluding London, is £2,117,000, whilst the cost of policing Ireland, excluding Dublin, is about £1,500,000—that is to say, that the policing of Ireland, with an almost purely rural population, excluding the City of Dublin, of about £4,500,000, costs within £500,000 of the policing of England, excluding London, but including all the other great cities and towns. Of the sum of £2,117,000 the Government contribute only £840,000. In Ireland, however, the Central Authority pays the whole cost of the police. They would not dare to put the expense on the rates in Ireland, because the police are so unpopular, are so much out of sympathy with the people, and do their work so badly, that it would bring about a revolution in Ireland, and the consequence is that they have to thrust their hands into the pockets of the English taxpayer. It is well for hon. Members to fix this fact in their minds—that whilst in England the general taxpayer has only to contribute £840,000 a-year for the policing of the whole of this great country, in Ireland he pays nearly double that amount. If we examine these figures, to find what it would take to police England at the same rate as Ireland, we shall discover that whereas the English Police at present cost £2,117,000, they would, on the Irish scale, cost exactly £8,000,000. You must remember that even this is a greatly understated case, because, undoubtedly, if you had in Ireland a Government which had the moral support of the people, it would not be necessary to have much more than one-half the number of police per head of the population that you have in England, for in England fully half the population is of an urban character. Everyone who has looked into the question knows perfectly well that it costs nearly double as much to police an urban population as it does to police a rural population. Our population in Ireland is rural; and, consequently, in a normal state of things—that is to say, with a Government which was in sympathy with the people—the police in Ireland would not cost more in proportion than one-half the expense of the English Police. And yet the fact is that, whereas in England the cost of the Police Force is just over £2,000,000, if it were conducted on the same costly system as the Irish Constabulary it would cost exactly £8,000,000. I ask any Member of the Government to go through these figures, and correct me, if he is able. It is impossible to do so. The facts are so extraordinary, so unknown, and so incredible almost to the people of England, that one needs to repeat illustrations in order to carry conviction to the mind of the Committee. Let me, then, direct the attention of Members of the Committee to this fact. I have worked out the numerical proportion of the police to the population under various circumstances, and I find that in the English boroughs that come under the Boroughs Act the proportion of the police to population is 1 to 750; that in the counties of England it is one to 1,200, and in the Metropolitan district 1 to 396. I should think it would be fair to say that in a normal state of things you would require three times as many policemen to keep order in the City of London as you would in the rural districts of Ireland. In the English counties one man is required to 1,200 of the population, whilst in the Metropolitan district you need one for every 396 of the population, so that the proportion there is less than one in three. We might, therefore, anticipate that the policing of Ireland could be done at proportionately exactly one-third of that of the Metropolitan district. And yet in the rural districts of Ireland you have actually a force of police coming within 50 or 60 men of the number employed in London. That is to say, that you have fully three times the number of men you ought to have in Ireland. In the county of Westmeath—and I invite anyone in this Committee to examine the Returns of agrarian disorder there—there is one policeman to every 233 of the inhabitants, or nearly five times the number justified by the English proportion. In Limerick, Meath, and Tipperary there is one policeman to every 260 of the inhabitants, which is much above the proportion in the Metropolis. If you turn to these counties in the criminal statistics, you will find that they are nearly free from crime. In the City of Dublin there is one policeman to every 312 of the inhabitants, which is very considerably in excess of the proportion in the City of London. I think that these figures ought to convince every Englishman that this is a question which will not brook delay. When we ask how this waste of public money can be justified, we are always met with the same old, old story. We are told that the system must be continued until the Irish people become peaceful, and until law and order is restored. But what I want to know is when, in the opinion of the Government, will that time come? These are the very statements and arguments which you will find to have been used in this House in 1835, in 1836, and in 1839. We have continually been told that as soon as the people of Ireland become peaceable and attached to the Government of Dublin Castle, as soon as they avoided evil and did good, the Irish Police Establishment would be reduced—that it would cease to be an armed force, officered by military men, and would become an entirely civil force. And yet we find that, instead of doing anything in this direction, the Irish Government have gone from bad to worse, and that they are continuing in the old, evil course to-day at the same rate as before. What I want to know is this. By what test are you going to discover when you shall really put your hands to the work of reducing the Irish Police Force to such a compass as any practical man will be able to approve of, both as regards cost and as regards discipline, arms, and officers? Is the test to be the comparison of crime in this country with that in Ireland? If so, I am prepared to stand that test to-day with regard to any period during the last 12 years. Is not that the only test which you are justified in using? And is not the test you act upon this—that until the people consent to become loyal to Castle government in Ireland you will not decrease the Irish Police? I say that this is a monstrous test to apply. The fact is that you are saddling the taxpayers with the cost of a monstrous, corrupt, and inefficient Police Force, for the purpose of evading the Mutiny Act, and retaining in the country a large force of military men without allowing them to appear on the Estimates as a military force. If you want a Police Force which will find out criminals and do its duty, you had better do away with the Irish Constabulary at once. No Government in its senses would expect that the ordinary duties of the police would be performed as long as the present Irish Constabulary officers remain in existence. What is the business of an Irish Constabulary officer? It consists of three things—namely, dining out with the country gentlemen whenever they get an invitation, flirting with all the girls of the neighbourhood, and going out shooting with all the landowners. These gentlemen are most tremendous swells. They receive salaries of about £150 a-year, so that they are always impecunious; and I can remember the time when it was their practice to levy blackmail. I do not say that they went round collecting it; but there was not a tradesman in the neighbourhood in which they were stationed who did not make presents to them two or three times a-year. It is not difficult for the Committee to understand how 16 or 17 armed constables, in a country place where there was hardly room for one civilian constable, could persecute and torture the traders if they did not do as the police wished. I can remember the time when every tradesman sent in his annual or triennial tribute to the Constabulary officer. Of course, the Police Inspector would not even deign to thank them. He would not like to be seen speaking to them. He is a swell; he associates only with gentlemen. He condescends to eke out his small income by presents from the tradesmen; but his associates are the country gentlemen. And he does the work of the country gentlemen. He is their obedient servant whenever they have any deed of oppression to carry out. Now, I say that this is not as it ought to be. What business has any policeman going about sporting? When he is doing so he is no longer a policeman, and it is no wonder that people have no confidence in the police when they see these men going about like military officers, assuming these preposterous airs, shooting with the country gentlemen, and doing, to a great extent, everything that the country gentlemen ask them to do. I say that this system is enough to paralyze and destroy the force as a police force. You might every bit as well scatter any of the regiments now in Egypt over Ireland or England and call their officers Constabulary officers. I am not sure that they would not do their duty better than the present officers of the Irish Constabulary. They, with their wider liberality and knowledge of the world, would be better than the wretched creatures who have seen nothing but the life of a country place in Ireland. These little local magnates, who have never got out of the small circles in which they have the power to tyrannize over the people, are the greatest tyrants in Ireland, particularly when they have encouragement and instruction from Dublin Castle to sneer at the people. This alone, I say, would destroy the efficiency of the Police Force of Ireland. But I will now turn for a few moments to the question of the basis on which the Government seek to defend the present establishment of the Irish Constabulary. I do not propose to go into the question in detail, but merely to refer to it as an illustration of my own contention. If it be true, as I have shown, that you spend a sum four times greater than is justifiable upon the Irish Police, you are bound to give some reason for it. What is your reason? Is it that the Irish people are a criminal people, and that you have more difficulty in Ireland than elsewhere in arresting criminals and preventing the commission of crimes? I say that there is not a shadow of ground for any such contention. Take the last criminal statistics of Ireland, and compare them with those of England. In England, according to the latest Returns, there were 43,000 indictable offences, and only 19,000 arrests; whilst in Ireland the indictable offences numbered 6,961, and the arrests 3,961. Therefore, in Ireland the arrests amounted to 52 per cent of the offences, whereas in England they were little more than 45 per cent. In England the population is about 23,000,000 or 24,000,000, and in Ireland it is 4,750,000, or a little more. Suppose, therefore, we say that the population of England is five times that of Ireland. That being so, we find that the proportion of indictable offences to population in England is in excess of that in Ireland. The case is a great deal stronger when we look at the details of the crimes. In England there were 136 murders, and in Ireland 18; in England there were 49 attempts to murder, and in Ireland 5; in England there were 269 manslaughters, and in Ireland 199. That is the only class of offence in which Ireland is slightly above the percentage as compared with England. In England there were 156 unnatural offences, and in Ireland 19; and in England there were 290 rapes, and in Ireland 41. There is, therefore, not the slightest possibility of denying that Ireland comes off much better in these matters than England. I do not know on what ground the Irish should require more police in proportion than England, unless it is on this one ground; and I have the greatest curiosity to hear what the Government defence is, because I think the time is coming when, if they do not put forward a sufficient defence in this House, we shall compel them to defend themselves in the country. I believe there is no subject in which English audiences are so much interested as in this subject of the Irish Police. If we prove to them that you are spending an unnecessary £1,000,000 sterling a-year, not because the Irish people are criminal, but because you wish to maintain bad government in that country and to protect the Irish landlords, it will interest the English people in an extraordinary way. We shall put an English Government which attempts to defend such a system on its defence before the country, and they will have to put forward a better excuse than the levying of landlords' rents, or the maintenance of Castle government in Ireland, or it will, I think, go hard with them. When I turn to the particulars of this Vote, I find that there is a very considerable increase in the item of travelling expenses, and also in the item of setting up special corps of police. I think we are entitled, in default of information to the contrary, to put down these increases to the evicting expeditions in Ireland. Certainly, unless the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) gives us some other satisfactory explanation, we are entitled to assume that that is how the increases are to be accounted for. Now, Sir, we have got some particulars of the expenditure occasioned by these evicting expeditions during the past year. I can remember, without referring to the figures, some of the facts; and I think it is a point on which we ought to press the Government for a statement as to whether they are or are not prepared to put some check or limit on the waste of public money in this respect. There is the well-known case of the evictions on Lord Clanricarde's estate this time last year. On that occasion four families were evicted at a cost of £3,000 to the country, and the sum recovered was £90. Of course, you will say that you must maintain the law, and must have regard to ulterior consequences. Well, what have been the ulterior consequences in that case? You spent all that money to carry out the whims and the unreasonable demands of a man who lives in this country, and who has no regard to the interests of his tenants. Well, Lord Clanricarde has never got a single shilling from that day to this out of a rental of £20,000, because, by your action, you so exasperated the people. You have paralyzed the payment of rent throughout the whole of those estates in South Galway. You may go on talking about maintaining order and enforcing the law. Do you maintain order? You maintain disorder. You disturb the country, you stop the collection of rents, and that is all you can show for the expenditure of £3,000. And yet you come down here every year with the same demands. Is it not time to inquire into the capability of Governments who do nothing but spend money, and then come down and sing parrot songs about the law being enforced, when it is shown that the very opposite is the case, and that they are promoting widespread discontent? Then there is the case of Glenbeigh—£490 was spent in evicting a lot of people there. Well, what has happened? The people of this country and the people of Ireland, out of their generosity, have subscribed £900 towards the relief of the Glenbeigh evicted tenants, and we have been supporting these tenants on charity ever since. Not one shilling of rent did you ever get at Glenbeigh; and, therefore, you might just as well have thrown your money into the sea. It is quite true that you enforced the law, for you burnt down the houses and encamped your police amongst the ruins. But when you speak of enforcing the law, do you mean getting a man his rent? If so, you have certainly not done that, and the landlord of Glenbeigh is infinitely further off getting his rent now than he was before the evictions took place. That I can answer for from my own personal experience. At the same time, the people are better off because your action attracted the attention of generous men in this country, and a considerable sum of money was sent over to them. The other day, in Derry, you sent a body of police to protect an evicting party. Well, the people were evicted, but they cannot and will not pay; and, at the same time, there is not the least chance of anybody being got to occupy the land until the evicted tenants are reinstated. The point which I would ask the Committee to consider is this—that, by these proceedings, you not only waste a great deal of money and exasperate the people, but you obtain nothing whatever for your money. I will offer this challenge to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour). Let him produce to me a single case in which, by employing a force of police to protect an eviction party, he has succeeded in levying a rent. He can do nothing of the sort. The expenditure upon these expeditions has been a total waste. I can mention case after case in which the police, after going to a district in this way, have marched away again, leaving the district much worse than they found it, and the landlord much further off getting his rent than he was before. In Mr. Brooke's case you spent, I suppose, some £500 or £600 of the English taxpayers' money, and the result is that the landlord is much further off getting his rent than he ever was. He could have got his rents before the police went there, if he had given such a reduction as any landlord in England would be proud and glad to give; but now he will not get them at all, for the people have been hunted from their homes, and the whole place has been turned into a desert. I have been obliged to build houses for the tenants, and to establish them elsewhere. Therefore, I say that the result of this system is simply to injure all parties, and I want to know whether it is to be continued? I would ask the Committee whether the case I am going to put does not open up a perfectly bottomless pit of expenditure in the direction of this Vote. Let any hon. Member turn to the account given by Mr. Constadine of what has been taking place in the County of Cavan. He furnishes as an instance of what has been going on, the case of a farm from which a tenant was evicted in that county. The rent of that farm was about £30 a-year, and the tenant was evicted and a caretaker put in possession. Mr. Constadine estimates that within three years the cost of looking after that farm was upwards of £1,000 to the Government, and that the landlord lost about £213 by the circumstance. If that is the way in which the police are to be employed in county Cavan, I should like to know what would be the cost if they have to multiply their efforts and apply the same sort of protection to 10,000 farms in Ireland? I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, whether he will let us know in next year's Estimate where all the money is going to, how much they intend to expend in evictions, and what will be the sum they propose to allow for the protection of caretakers on farms from which the tenants have been evicted? We need this information to guide us in obtaining some clue to the cause of the enormous increase that has taken place in this Constabulary Vote. At present, I confess I am utterly at a loss to account for the fact, although I have looked over the matter very carefully, that in the course of the last seven years the Constabulary Vote has increased by the enormous sum of £300,000 a-year. Where can all this increase have arisen? If a police system like that I have been endeavouring to describe is kept up, there are many farms in Ireland that will have to be kept up at a cost of some £300 a-year the rent of which, like that of the farm I have just spoken of, is only £30 a-year. I, for my part, will do everything I can to bring this matter before this House and the country so as to let them know exactly what is the result of the system of throwing away £1,000,000 of the public money every year, simply because the Irish landlords are not amenable to sense or reason. I have thought it necessary to take up the time of the Committee at some length on this Vote, and I would add that Her Majesty's Government may rely upon it that unless we have some assurance given to us that a real and honest effort will be made on their part to turn over a new leaf on the question of Irish police expenditure, they will have to face a long and protracted and exhaustive discussion on the question of the Irish Constabulary Vote.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I will endeavour to deal with some of the principal points that have been raised by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). The first point dwelt upon by the hon. Gentlemen was the increase that has taken place in the Constabulary Vote, and, undoubtedly, if we take a long series of years, that increase has been considerable, and deserves consideration and explanation. With regard to the comparison of the present year with the last four or five years, I do not know that we can fairly say the increase has been considerable. My right hon. Friend behind me says the expenditure is less than last year, and, as a matter of fact, the cost during the years 1882, 1883, 1884 and 1885, has really sometimes gone up and sometimes down, although I admit that on the average it has been during those years largely in excess of what was found to be necessary in Ireland in 1867, 1870, and prior to that period. Then the hon. Gentleman went on to point out, not merely the increase of the Constabulary Vote, but its absolute magnitude as compared with the expenditure that is found necessary in England for police purposes. The hon. Gentleman has given us a long series of figures on this point, which I have had no opportunity of checking or examining; but I am not at all concerned in contesting the general accuracy of the facts and conclusions that have been laid before the Committee by the hon. Member, and which I am not prepared to deny. Indeed

I doubt whether it could be denied that the cost of the Constabulary in Ireland is largely in excess of that which is incurred for police purposes in England, nor that this has been so, as far as I know, for a long time past—not merely for the last five or six years—but even if we were to go back for the last 20 or 30 years. The hon. Gentleman has asked us how we account for this, and how we are able to justify it. Sir, we justify it by saying that great as the cost of the police force is in Ireland at the present moment it is not greater than the absolute necessities of the case require. Unhappily the case of Ireland does require that the sum of £1,300,000 should be expended on the police force by the Exchequer. This may be a matter for our regret, and undoubtedly it is a matter for regret, but our regret ought also to be for the causes which have produced such a state of things, and we ought not simply to turn our attention to the state of things that has been produced. If the hon. Gentleman asks me what are the causes which have brought about this state of things, our answer must, of course, in the first place be, the historical circumstances that have made the Irish problem the most painful problem in the whole range of British politics, which have made the Irish Question a question which has been the despair of successive generations of politicians—[An hon. MEMBER: Tyranny, simply.]—and which I am bound to say does not appear to be near its immediate, complete, final, and satisfactory solution. But if the hon. Gentleman without going into these historical disquisitions asks me what is the cause existing at the present moment as to why so large an expenditure is required for police purposes in Ireland, I say it is a state of things with which he, more than any other man, ought to be acquainted; because he, as much as any other man, has been in certain cases responsible for the state of feeling in the public mind, which has made it absolutely necessary in order to carry on the operation of the law that a very large force of police should be employed. The hon. Gentleman has compared the police in Ireland, which is a rural country, with the number of police required in the rural parts of England, and has drawn a further comparison between the cost of the rural police of England and the Constabulary of Ireland, very much to the disadvantage of Ireland. But who is there who denies that the condition of the rural parts of Ireland is unhappily of a kind which absolutely requires a far larger proportion of police to carry out the law than is required in the rural districts of England? Who denies this and who, I ask, is responsible for it? [Mr. DILLON here made an observation which the right hon. Gentleman did not fully hear.] I do not distinctly hear what the hon. Gentleman says; but the point I was concerned to prove when the hon. Member interrupted me in a manner I failed to understand, was this—I was pointing out that the condition of the rural districts in Ireland was such that they required a larger force of police than the rural parts of England; and, of course, that arises from the state of agrarian discontent which has produced a crop of agrarian crime of a kind which is absolutely foreign and unknown to any of the rural districts of England. But, although I undoubtedly confess that the fact that there is such a condition of things in Ireland may be, and is a matter for regret, and a subject that ought to engage the attention of Parliament, still that is not a reason why we should refuse to grant that support to the authorities, and the Courts of Law which is absolutely necessary in order to enable them to carry out the law. The hon. Gentleman in going into the subject compares the amount of money expended on the police force in the carrying out of evictions with the amount of money obtained from the evicted tenants——

MR. DILLON: No money is obtained from the evicted tenants.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Very well, then; with the amount that ought to be obtained. He has compared the amount of money that is spent on the employment of the police at these evictions with the amounts, be it little or nothing, that is obtained from the evicted tenants, and then went on to show that these expenses ought not to be inflicted on the community at large. This argument I entirely deny; I entirely traverse the contention of the hon. Gentleman who takes the expenditure for the police under the head of evictions, as if it were a commercial speculation to be estimated by the percentage of return. The only question Her Majesty's Government can ask themselves in such a matter is this—what is the strength of the force that is required in order to support the officers of the law, and whatever that force may be, be it small or large, it must be provided. If the force be large the responsibility rests in the first instance on those who have done their best to foment the discontent which unhappily prevails in so many of the rural districts of Ireland at the present moment. The hon. Gentleman has said—

> "Can you deny that the Irish population, and especially the population of the rural districts, is a population singularly free from crime? If you admit this what reason can you possibly assign for keeping up these large bodies of police in Ireland, unless it be to protect the Irish landlords?"

Mr. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman has not correctly stated what I said. I did not say the Irish landlords.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member did use the phrase "The Irish landlords" for I took it down at the time; but I have not the least desire to insist on the point if the hon. Gentleman withdraws the statement or denies that he used it. But I would ask is it not clear that debts, whether they be of rent or any other kind, must be collected if civilization is to exist? Is the hon. Gentleman disposed to respect contract or is he not? Is the question of contract proposed to be made one of the subjects in regard to which the popular mind is to be inflamed, and in regard to which the popular mind is to be opposed to the Government; is it to be one of the questions on which the hon. Gentleman proposes to go down to the country and excite a popular agitation, and supposing the hon. Member to be one who looks forward to the time when he may be one of the principal persons concerned in the government of Ireland, will he, I ask, when he is Home Secretary for Ireland, propose to enforce contracts or will he not? My belief is that whatever the hon. Member may choose to say in this House, he is far too much of a statesman to stand face to face with such a state of things without feeling that his first and paramount duty would be to enforce the law—to see that the officers of the law were protected, and to see that contracts, whether with regard to land or anything else, were carried out. That is what I believe the hon. Gentleman opposite would feel to be his duty should he ever become responsible for the government of Ireland. At any rate, we, who are responsible for the government of Ireland, deem that to be our duty; and it is because we feel it to be our duty, and because we know that we cannot carry out that duty without cost that we think it absolutely necessary to ask the Committee to agree to the Vote before them. There is one other point on which it is necessary that I should trouble the Committee with a few words. The hon. Member has accused the officers of the Irish Constabulary of levying blackmail in various districts and villages of Ireland. A more baseless accusation was never levelled against a most honourable, useful, and efficient body of public officers. I very much regret that the hon. Gentleman should have thought it necessary to supplement his argument by making so groundless an accusation against the Irish Constabulary. Whether the hon. Gentleman approves of the existence of that force or not I think that he, as an Irishman, ought to be proud of a body of men so distinguished for their sense of public duty, and for the energy and zeal with which they carry out the commands of their superiors. The hon. Gentleman may object to those commands, and may think that the Government of this country ought not to insist upon their being executed. But that is a part of the subject into which it is unnecessary for me to enter; all I now say is, that it was absolutely unnecessary as well as unjust for the hon. Member to attack the Royal Irish Constabulary who, after all, are only acting in the discharge of their undoubted duty. I do not know that there was anything else which fell from the hon. Gentleman which I need reply to. The hon. Member has raised questions with regard to various evictions; but those questions have been discussed before by the House, and the hon. Gentleman did not, as far as I could see, raise any new argumentative points with regard to those evictions. If such points should be raised by any hon. Members taking part in the discussion, I will give them such an answer as they may seem to require.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I very much regret that the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), who is so anxious to promote economy in this House, especially in connection with the Army and Navy, has never thought of directing attention to the enormous charge of £1,500,000 sterling which is made for the maintenance of the Royal Irish Constabulary. Englishmen have good reason to be proud of their Army and Navy; they can have no reason for attacking them; nobody complains of them, and if the unfortunate soldier or sailor should get 1½*d.* a-day too much we do not grudge the payment; but in the case of the Royal Irish Constabulary we have a service that is absolutely useless, which nobody wants, which nobody has desired, and which exists admittedly for the purpose of propping up a system that is absolutely hateful to nine-tenths of the population of Ireland. What we complain of is, that you are keeping up this hateful system at an enormously high charge upon the Public Exchequer. If you must keep up this system in Ireland you ought to keep it up at a far cheaper rate. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has said we are bound to pay the rents demanded by the landlords or we shall relapse into barbarism. With regard to the statement made by my hon. Friend as to the levying of blackmail, there can be no doubt that the system exists to some extent, and that it will continue to prevail as long as you have 200 or 300 persons in a village amenable to the control of a single individual who has the command of so many bayonets. I do not believe that even in Egypt, although there are Constitutional safeguards which we have not got in Ireland, there are, with the exception of the Kourbash, more petty annoyances than are inflicted on the Irish people by the Sub-Inspectors and petty officers of the police under the orders of the agents and magistrates of the country. Let me take the case of an evicted tenant which has been brought under my notice. He was arrested on the complaint of a land-grabber on some charge of assault. Well, what was done in that case? Instead of taking him at once before the nearest magistrates by whom the case could at once have been dealt with, he was kept all night in a lock-up and subjected to the greatest inconvenience for which no redress is obtainable. These are the things that are done by the police for the purpose of inflicting inconvenience on the people, and there is no remedy. My hon. Friend has not as he might have done complained of the course taken by the Government in appointing the police officers. How are these Sub-Inspectors appointed? It is generally supposed they are appointed by competition, and it is the fact that many of them are, and the result is that a number of English gentlemen, with a very bad knowledge of Ireland, a country of which some of them hardly knew the existence before, come over and take the command of our Constabulary; but by far the larger portion of these cadets, as was stated by Mr. Forster five or six years ago, are nominated by the Inspector General, and in this way we have the sons of landlords and of landlords agents and of other persons in the country who are for the most part opposed to the people, placed in charge of the police. The Committee should understand that we have no grievance against the police themselves, because they are drawn from the ranks of the people; but the Irish police are under the command of these Royal Irish Constabulary officers who are appointed by nomination and a system of selection, the nominations being given exclusively to Freemasons and members of the Orange class, so that practically the police are obliged to carry out the commands of the enemies of the people. This completes the circuit. You have a magistrate sitting on the Bench as landlords' agent, you have the Sub-Inspector who brings complaints before him appointed because he is the son of a landlord, or of an agent; and you have no protection for the tenant, who is in no way represented in this arrangement. The landlord is a magistrate; the agent is a magistrate; and the Sub-Inspector in command of the police is the son of a magistrate or an agent, or, if not the son of one of these, he is under numberless favours to the landlord class, in consequence of the curious ideas of social distinction which prevail among these people. It seems to be a rule in our Irish country towns that by rubbing shoulders with a miserable landlord, or agent, who could not pay 5*s.* in the pound, but who can give the right of shooting rabbits, or of fishing on their estates, these police officers acquire some sort of distinction; and it is complained that they are for ever endeavouring to curry favour with the landlords, in order to get the privilege of shooting and fishing on their property. This is a vicious system; and the rule which is carried out in India ought to prevail in Ireland. We ought to prevent our civil servants in Ireland from accepting any emoluments or favours from the residents of the localities in which they are stationed, as is the case with our civil servants in India. This rule had to be adopted in the case of our Land Commissioners. They were, when they were first appointed, in the habit of dining and wining with the landlords and agents, and of using the carriages of which they had the command; and the Government were obliged to step in and stop all this by making a rule which prevented the Commissioners from mixing in such a way with the landlords. The same rule ought to prevail with regard to the Sub-Inspectors of the Constabulary and the magistrates, who ought to be prevented from mixing with the landlords and their wives and daughters, and not allowed to accept the favours of the gentry resident in their several districts. As the people will not mix with them, they ought not to be allowed to mix with the enemies of the people. Let them associate with their own comrades in the police force, and, in garrison towns, with the officers of the garrison, and they will then have the sort of society they are entitled to expect; and, having that, if the Government provide them with their other requirements and necessities, they ought to be content with their position. I will just give the Committee an instance of the way in which the present system works. In County Clare, last year, a Sub-Inspector of police was out shooting with some of the local personages; and what happened? Why, he shot an unfortunate gamekeeper, or bailiff, who was killed. I suppose he was not a good shot; but, at any rate, he killed the unfortunate man. Well, when the man was killed, what happened? The person who shot him was a Sub-Inspector, and, consequently, all inquiry or inquest was avoided. No inquest, need I say, was held; and Mr. Seddon—I think that was the name of this Sub-Inspector—rode off, having killed a man, without the slightest inquiry being made into the transaction. Now, there cannot be too much for these gentlemen to do; and if there were fewer of them they would not be missed. One of the most notorious of these Irish officials is now in Egypt, where, for the last two or three years, he has been re-organizing the Egyptian Service, and no one in Ireland misses him. I do not know whether the Egyptians want him to remain there; but I am quite sure the Irish people do not miss him; and when, in addition to the sending out of certain persons to Egypt, there is found to be so large an amount of spare time for the diversions of the police officers in Ireland, in fishing, shooting, and hunting, I think the Government might seriously consider whether they cannot afford to make a reduction in the number they employ. There is another question to which I should like to call the attention of the Committee. All the police—Sub-Inspectors and men—are drilled and housed in an enormous barrack in Phœnix Park, Dublin. Here in England it is not thought necessary to house the police recruits in an enormous palace in one of the public parks; but we have got to that length in Ireland that we cannot put the awkward squads through their preliminary drill without having a sort of Royal Palace to keep them in, and a Royal Park in which they are put through their evolutions. Why cannot the Irish police be drilled, like any other body of men, in their own barracks, and in their own localities? Why are we to keep up an enormous and costly establishment in the Phœnix Park, and maintain that place as a national recruiting ground? The whole system seems to exist for the benefit of the serving maids and nursery girls. Why cannot those who want to join the Police Force join it at the different local barracks, and be drilled there? And if it is not desirable to retain them for duty in their own localities, let them be drafted off to the places where they are required. I protest against this huge job, which is being continued year after year, of keeping up in Dublin an enormous system for the drilling of these Constabulary recruits, and for maintaining a large staff of officers to superintend their drill. I protest also against the additional encroachments on the Phœnix Park by the building of married men's quarters for the police. You have gone to an enormous expense in regard to this; but I will raise the matter specifically on the Park Vote when we come to it, although, as it is a branch of the subject we are now discussing, I may briefly allude to it here. I do not suppose there were more policemen married in 1887 than in 1886 or 1885. If this be so, why has the Treasury sanctioned the erection of married men's quarters in one year more than another? I presume the marriage rate remains the same as before, and in that case why did the Government for the first time in the course of half a century find it necessary to build married men's quarters, and why also, if they deemed it necessary, did they stick the building in the Phœnix Park as an eyesore to the public, when something of a more beautiful character might have been erected? I wish, also, to raise a question with regard to the evictions that have been going on in Ireland; and it is simply this—Strong complaints have been made with regard to the system of evictions that existed at the time of the passing of the Land Act, under which the police rushed into the houses before the bailiffs and so superseded the bailiffs in their duty. This was the practice carried out at Bodyke, Coolgreaney, and Glenbeigh, where the police rushed in through the holes made by their bayonets. I hope the Chief Secretary will consider this matter. The question of carrying out evictions is a serious one. It ought to be clearly established that eviction is a civil duty, that it is the enforcement of civil rights, and, in my judgment and belief, you are only bound to protect him on whom the law casts the duty and no more. You must afford him protection according to the law; but you have no right to do more than that. You are not bound to keep soldiers and police under the charge of the sheriff when his men are engaged in burning down the houses of the evicted tenants, nor are the police bound to go in and do bailiff's duty. This, however, is what was done at the places I have named. The young members of the Force who hope to get an additional stripe and additional pay, try to make themselves agreeable to their officers, and it ought to be insisted on that the officers shall see that the men do their duty and no more, and that any excess of zeal will go unrewarded. There is another matter I desire to mention with reference to the charge for making up the criminal statistics. In this Vote I find there is an item of some £40, which includes a payment of £20 to a junior clerk for the preparation of criminal statistics. Is it the case that the preparation of criminal statistics is placed in the hands of a junior clerk? We have raised questions with regard to these criminal statistics, and seeing that it is upon the criminal statistics with which you are furnished, that the Government system of legislation in dealing with Ireland depends, you ought to have something better than a junior clerk at a salary of £20 a-year to make them out. In fact, the Chief Secretary has admitted that these statistics are unsatisfactory; and yet we find that one junior clerk in receipt of £20 a-year is entrusted with their preparation. This is a matter of national importance and demands inquiry, and I ask on what basis are the criminal statistics of Ireland to be placed in future? What is to be the new system for the classification of statistics which is to redress the balance declared by the Government to have been shaken by the old plan of preparation. The Chief Secretary has issued a most unfair and partizan like foot note to the statistics, and has raised the entire question, and I say that we are entitled to ask what is the new method which is to act in a double way, so as on the one hand to prevent exaggeration, and on the other hand to prevent anything like understatement of the agrarian crime in Ireland? This matter of criminal statistics is one which, when debates on the state of Ireland arise in this House, is made one of the means to final ends in the shape of legislation. Take the question of the Returns issued by the Government as to the alleged 5,000 cases of Boycotting. Who is responsible for that statement? The rural Irish Constabulary say that A or B is Boycotted, and no individual has an opportunity of checking that statement so as to see whether it is true or not; and if instead of 5,000 or 4,000 persons being Boycotted, the police had said there were 40,000 or 400,000, what check should we have upon them? In point of fact, we are entirely at the mercy of the police, whose interest it is to keep up the fictitious amount of crime in order to keep up a fictitious force and salaries. Therefore I say we ought to know on what plan the Government are proceeding—on what new basis the statistics furnished by the Royal Irish Constabulary is to proceed? I should like to know what is regarded as Boycotting, and whether my name figures in the list of 4,000 or 5,000 persons said to be Boycotted; and if not, why not? Am I to be considered Boycotted because the most offensive substances have been thrown at the door of my house in Dublin and my windows broken? I want to know what is Boycotting? Is it being ex-communicated, so to speak, by the local public and prevented from obtaining rations or other requisites in one's own district? I ask the Government to give us some definition of the word Boycotting, and also some statement as to the plan the Government propose to pursue in dealing with the persons charged with Boycotting. I would warn the Chief Secretary—the Under Secretary knows this well—that nothing is more common at the present time than to be Boycotted. A Boycotted man, moreover, is one of the happiest men in Ireland. When a man is Boycotted, they will not allow labourer's cottages to be erected on his land; the police will buy all their milk and butter of him. A Boycotted man in Ireland is like an uncrowned king. He is placed on what is altogether a superior level to that of the rest of the population. He has the police and the military dealing with him for everything his farm produces, and the other day I saw an account of a man who stated that he was Boycotted, and his rent was reduced 50 per cent in consequence. If the people once get at what the privileges of Boycotting really are instead of there only being 4,000 Boycotted persons there are more likely to be 400,000. There is another matter in connection with this Vote to which I will just refer. It is an item relating to what is a very useful thing, and I do not object to it; but, at the same time, I wish to know why the Government have placed under this Vote £306 as the amount of the guarantee of the expense of a telegraph to Belmullet, County Mayo. I remember when the telegraph was first laid down to Belmullet. Earl Spencer showed how communication was cut off from that part of the country until the telegraph was made; but surely the British taxpayer has a right to know why the cost of that work should be charged upon this Vote, and why it is not put under the Postal Vote to which it ought properly to be debited. But the British taxpayer will be surprised to find that John Bull is taking £306 out of his breeches pocket, and putting it into the hands of the Irish taxpayers. If the Post Office has to make a charge of £306 for a telegraph to Belmullet, why is it not charged to the Post Office Vote? There is another question which was raised in this House four or five weeks ago with regard to the practice which exists among the Irish police of carrying their side arms while attending Divine Worship. This is a matter which has caused great annoyance, and I saw that some time ago in this House the Secretary of State for War stated with regard to the English soldiers, or marines, I forget which, that those men would not be allowed to carry their bayonets when going to church, except on occasions of parade. Of course, it is quite right that when our soldiers or any of the armed servants of the Queen go to church for purposes of parade, they should carry their weapons with them. Nobody objects to that. I think I have seen soldiers carry their guns and bayonets with them on such occasions. The people do not object to that because soldiers are not supposed to go without their arms. But it is a most objectionable thing to see the police going to Mass with their bayonets. They are a civil force, and surely their batons ought to be sufficient to protect them during Divine service. It is not pretended that they are ever attacked during Divine service, or that they can possibly have any use for their bayonets on such occasions. I remember raising this question during the time the late Mr. Forster was Chief Secretary, and I think that this practice of carrying side arms by the police when they go to church is one to which a stop ought to be put. Finally, I should like to say one word with regard to the loss of life during the Belfast riots. I refer to the case of the unfortunate head-constable Gardner. The widow of that unfortunate man comes from the district I have the honour to represent, and I want to know what compensation is to be given to that poor woman for the loss she sustained by the death of her husband? I presume that all persons wounded or maimed during those riots have got compensation, and there are complaints that the police have got more compensation than the military; but I have nothing whatever to do with that. If the Constabulary get extra money, it is only what they are entitled to. What I desire to know is what is to be done in the case of head-constable Gardner's widow? That woman has not been able to obtain for the loss of her husband the compensation she would otherwise be entitled to, and I should like to hear from the Government what remuneration they propose to allow in her case? Then I desire to say a word upon the question of the Police Fund which is exciting at the present moment in Ireland the very keenest and closest attention. The Constabulary pensioners are up in arms, and they say, according to the allegations made to me, that the administration of this fund is entirely unsatisfactory. I think it is very desirable to allay a feeling of dissatisfaction amongst a body of men whom the country may require again. The Government would do well to grant an audit for a period further back than seven years. I have heard very extraordinary allegations made with regard to the disposition of this fund. The fund is in the charge of the Inspector General of Constabulary. It would not be proper for me to repeat some of the allegations giving the names of the men, but undoubtedly it has been charged that former Inspector Generals of Constabulary and other officials have received gratuities of an enormous amount out of this fund. I presume these stories are exaggerated. I do not think any Government would distribute largess of this kind, or allow gentlemen to dip their hands into this fund to the tune of thousands of pounds. There is an easy way to get out of the difficulty, and that is to extend the audit further back than seven years, say for 14 years. An audit of this kind will allay the very intense indignant feelings that exists amongst the Constabulary pensioners at the present time. I must say it is an unfortunate thing that for so many years past a fund like the Royal Irish Constabulary Fund, which is owned by the men, which has been created by fines and deductions from the men's pay, which fines deductions, if lumped together, would amount to an enormous sum of money, should have remained so long practically under the charge, I will not say of irresponsible individuals, but individuals upon whom a proper check has not been placed. I think that the analogy afforded by the case of the Patriotic Fund in England should be adopted in regard to this fund. The English Patriotic Fund is protected by Act of Parliament; it is protected by there being a committee whose accounts are audited, and which consists of gentlemen of position, and which is absolutely unassailable. I think the Irish Constabulary Fund ought to be placed on a similar unassailable basis, so that these pensioners should know that their money is not being dribbled away and wasted in an improper manner. I do not make any complaint, but the men do. Whether the complaints are ill-founded or not, an audit ought to be granted. If the complaints are well founded, and the Government will not grant the audit sought, we shall be able to draw our own inferences. No political considerations are involved in this matter, and I sincerely trust the Government will see their way to grant the audit I have mentioned.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): The extraordinary costliness of the Irish Constabulary Force is a fact very familiar to all who are in the habit of discussing Irish Estimates in this House. It is the most hideous pecularity of English rule in Ireland that Ireland is the only country in the world where with a steady decreasing population there is a steadily increasing Constabulary Force. It does not matter a pin whether crimes increase or decrease, the money cost of the Constabulary Force in Ireland remains about the same. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland thinks he makes a good reply if he speaks about contract. He says we must maintain contract in Ireland. If you persist in maintaining contracts which are repugnant to everybody in the country, a very large force, whether civil or military, will be required. The right hon. Gentleman, replying to my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), said—"If you were Home Secretary, you would have to maintain contract, and the police force would have to be kept up." Yes; but if my hon. Friend were Home Secretary, the contracts maintained would not be repugnant to everybody. They would be contracts that people would be able to fulfil and satisfy; and whilst the police force in Ireland is now the dearest by far in the world, under the administration of my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillon) the administration of the police would be the cheapest in the world. I notice that the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) went down to Huntingdon the other day and endeavoured to mislead the electoral mind by showing the great disproportion between the number of offences in Ireland and the number of convictions obtained. Now, the cause of that is perfectly clear. Why are the convictions so few in proportion to agraian offences? Because the police are not a crime-detecting force. To call them police is a misnomer. They are trained to act in battalions and to manœuvre in the field; but they are not trained, as they ought to be, and as police in other countries are, for the detection of crime. They are trained to overawe the people at public meetings and to expel them from their homes. They do this work readily, rapidly, and competently; but they are not trained —the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) will agree with me—for the detection of crime. The very moment a man enters the force he is required to submit to a perfect military discipline. Until you change the system you will never have a crime-detecting force in Ireland. The costliness of the police arises out of the fact that the people are not in sympathy with your law. Until your laws are changed, until the people spontaneously and freely uphold the law, you will always have a police force the cost and inefficiency of which will be a disgrace to your rule. Some reference has been made to the cost of affording police protection. Now, no doubt, the Estimate for this year is greatly swollen by the cost of what is called special police protection. We learned from a recent Return given by the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman), who has left the House just at the time he is really wanted, that there are 1,001 persons in Ireland receiving police protection. That I suppose keeps a good many constables employed. Now, I decline to assent, without active resistance, to the passing of any Vote for the Irish Constabulary until we are told who are the persons, and where they are, who are receiving police protection. I say the refusal to give the names of these persons is a mockery and delusion. I pressed the Parliamentary Under Secretary on this subject the other day. I asked what were the conditions of the persons who were receiving protection? He divided them into two classes, those who receive casual protection—namely, persons whose houses are visited and observed by patrols several times in every 24 hours, and those receiving complete police protection, who pass their lives in the presence of the police, who have scores of police in their houses, who are accompanied in their walks and rides by the police. What is the common-sense of withholding the names of these persons from the knowledge of the House? Their condition, if it is such as described, is notorious. It is known to every man, woman, and child of the district in which these persons live. What harm can publicity do in this House when they have publicity in their own district to the fullest and most absolute extent? Now, this is a fraud. There is no defence to the denial to give the names of these people. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) has just pointed out that these people make money by being Boycotted and being protected by the police. I know cases where people in Ireland procure police protection for the purpose of making money, for the purpose of receiving money for the accommodation of the police, and upon the sale of provisions to the police. Many people make a larger profit by these means than they can make out of their land. Therefore, we challenge you to-night to give us every information upon this subject of police protection. We challenge you to say who these people are, as Mr. Forster did in 1881, to enable us to sift the question, to ascertain for ourselves how far in any particular case the Boycotting and police protection is the result of the man's own recklessness and obstinacy, and how many make a profit out of the fact that they are under police protection. Some reference has been made to the subject of evictions, and I wish to know what is the meaning of a statement made this morning in reference to eviction on the estate of The O'Grady at Herbertstown in Limerick. I see it stated that County Inspector Moriarty has sent the Sheriff word that the required force will be ready on Tuesday morning, and that it is perfectly understood that the evictions would commence on that day. The statement adds—it appears in *The Daily News*—that Mr. Moriarty also indicated that no more police would be supplied for duty at evictions for non-payment of rent. Well, I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), or someone in a responsible position, will tell us what is meant by the statement that no more police will be supplied for duty at evictions for non-payment of rent. What system is hereafter to be adopted? Now, I have to ask a question concerning the constables who lately resigned their places in the police force, in consequence of the passing of the Crimes Act. I call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland particularly to the case of the resignation of the constables in the Castleisland district. These men resigned their position in the force because the Coercion Act would render their odious duties still more odious; and I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland how many constables have resigned in consequence of the passing of the Crimes Act; and whether it is true, as I have heard, that in the case of the constables who have resigned for a cause which I consider to be highly honourable to them, the Government have refused to give them, upon their leaving the force, the ordinary certificate of good character which constables receive on their discharge? I have heard that a constable named Maguire, quartered in Devis Street Barracks, in my own constituency, has been refused such a certificate. The cause of his resignation was similar to that of the constables in the Castleisland district, and he stated it in the most respectful language before his superior officer. The man resigned in obedience to his conscience, and I suppose no one will say he was obliged to violate it. He hated the duty he was called upon to discharge, and when he was about to emigrate to America to strive to make his way in a foreign land, he was refused a certificate of good conduct. Not only that, but the authorities refused to refund him some money he had subscribed to some fund which he would have been entitled to have refunded if he had been discharged in the ordinary manner. Now, I wish to ask for some explanation with regard to the circulation in the Irish police barracks of the abominable libels circulated by *The Times* under the name of "Parnellism and Crime." We asked the Government for an inquiry into these allegations; but they ran away from it. They never granted us an inquiry; they foresaw what the result would be. Since then they have proclaimed the association in Ireland to which we all belong. Every man of us is a member of the National League. There were three other grounds connected with crime on which they might have proclaimed that organization. Why did they refrain from doing so? Because they were afraid of the falsity of the miserable accusations of *The Times* being demonstrated. Now, I ask the Government whether, having refused the Irish Members a Select Committee to inquire into these allegations, and having refrained from proclaiming the organization to which we all belong upon any ground connected directly or remotely with crime, they are going to allow police barracks to be flooded with this libellous literature? The other day the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman), replying to a Question put in this House, said—"We cannot undertake to interfere with the literature studied by the Irish police." I cannot compliment him upon the grace with which he appears in the novel capacity of a patron of literature. It is said, Mr. Courtney, that the Irish police are allowed to read *United Ireland*. They are not; and I say that the shrift of the constable who was seen reading *United Ireland* would be very short indeed.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I said I have seen them reading *United Ireland*.

MR. SEXTON: If the right hon. and gallant Gentleman saw them reading *United Ireland* they were not doing so by leave. It is a very curious thing that the same post which brought the Proclamation of the Irish counties under the Coercion Act last month to the police barracks in every county in Ireland brought to every barracks in Ireland, so far as I can discover, a packet of *The Times*' libels under the name of "Parnellism and Crime." They were sent in great quantities addressed to the Sergeant in charge, R.I.C., such and such station, such and such county. They bore not the ordinary postage stamp, but the impressed stamp, showing that they had been posted in large quantities. I look at this question from two points of view, and I ask, first, will the Government permit the police barracks of Ireland to be used for the dissemination of libels upon the Representatives of the Irish people here; and, secondly, will they permit police constables, who have sympathy with the people, to be insulted by the dissemination of these libels? I have received a letter from a constable enclosing a wrapper in which the pamphlets were sent, and in which the writer says—

> "I hope you will be able to see your way to ask a question on this matter, if it is to do nothing more than to show our English friends how careful some people are"—some patrons of literature—"to keep the Royal Irish Constabulary a non-political force."

I have received another letter from a constable, who said the men of the force dare not show *United Ireland*, nor *The Weekly Times*, nor *The Nation* in barracks; and he added that several most objectionable publications containing the grossest libels on the Irish National Members, and on everything Irish and Catholic, were sent to every head quarter station in the county, and to almost all the out stations of the county from which he wrote. In these papers the police were lauded up to the skies, and one gave the portraits of a Cavalry policeman and an Infantry policeman. Underneath were, according to the writer, a number of most disgusting verses about the Irish Members, who were called seditious mongers, &c. One of these, he says, is hung in the day room of every police station. The police tear down placards outside police barracks by your orders, but I tell you plainly that there are police constables in Ireland with sufficient spirit to tear down inside the stations such placards as these if the order is not promptly given for their removal. I shall press to-night, and ask my hon. Friends to assist me in pressing, for an engagement that the buildings paid for by public money will not be flooded, and that the constables paid out of the taxation of the United Kingdom will not have their minds corrupted by the circulation of libels against the body of the Representatives of the people, the falsehood of which both by the omission and commission of the Government have been abundantly proved. Now I have to refer to one or two questions of finance. First of all, let me say a word or two with regard to the position of the police pensioners who left the force between December, 1872, and August, 1874. A Royal Commission sat in 1872, and reported upon the pay and pension of the Royal Irish force. They recommended an increase of both pay and pension, and that the increase of pay should come into operation from December, 1872, but that the increase of pension which was founded upon the increase of pay should not come into force until August, 1874. The men, therefore, who left the force between those dates were not allowed to receive the higher pension. As a matter of strict justice, I had desired to plead with the Government for these men. I believe Irish Members of every school of politics are of opinion that those men who received higher pay in consequence of the Report of the Commission ought to be placed on a level with the constables who left the force subsequently. I have also to refer to the extraordinary position of the Constables' Fund. The Government need not hope that they will be allowed to escape lightly in respect to this question, which is one of the very greatest moment. This Constabulary Force Fund was founded in 1836, more than 50 years ago. It was maintained for many years by a compulsory reduction from the pay of the men of the force. For many years that deduction amounted to 2½ per cent of their pay, it was then reduced to 1½ per cent. During the last 50 years that this fund has been in existence—and it has amounted to many thousands of pounds—the administration of the fund has been entrusted to one individual, the Inspector General of Police, and there has not been a correct or public account rendered until the 14th of day of June of this year. What has become of the hundreds of thousands of pounds paid into this fund? It was a fund founded ostensibly for the relief of the widows and orphans of constables and pensioners of the force. The pensioners claim, in the first place, that they shall have a full account rendered for the years prior to, and not only for the last seven years. The accounts presented in June give three or four general heads of receipts and general heads of outlay; the men who have subscribed to this fund for 50 years, and many of whom are yet alive, require a different account. They ask for an account showing, in the first place, the general heads of receipts for every year since the foundation of the fund; and, in the second place, with regard to the expenditure showing the particulars of each payment made, and the cause of the payment. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) showed considerable forbearance just now in his references or allusions to this subject. Among others, County Inspector J. E. French, had, at one time, control of a considerable portion of this fund. There is a belief that French used the money of this fund for secret service; some people have been led to the conclusion that he used it for his own secret service. He purchased landed property which has since come under the control of the Bankruptcy Court, and it is also believed by many members of the force that French was allowed to draw upon this fund in order to meet the expenses of his own action against Mr. W. O'Brien and *United Ireland*, and actually for the defence of himself when he was indicted criminally by the Crown. We do not commit ourselves to these rumours, but I submit, as men of all parties will agree, that it is undesirable that a fund made up from the subscriptions of constables should be so privately administered, and so kept out of the view of any responsible auditor as to keep the subscribers totally in the dark as to the appropriation of the money. It is necessary the fund should be checked. I now ask the Government that they will lay on the Table of this House, with the utmost possible speed, an account showing upon the debit side the principle heads of receipts since 1836, and upon the credit side the payments made to every person and the reasons for which they were made. We shall press this matter, and continue to press it until we receive an answer, as I have no doubt we shall eventually. Now, this fund operates very unfairly as between officers and men of the force. I asked the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) lately, whether it was not true that the officers of the force had at one time a fund for the relief of their widows and orphans. The right hon. Gentleman did not know that there was such a fund, and that the officers desired that the fund should be wound up, and that in obedience to their request it was wound up. I can well understand why the officers' fund was brought to an end, because I plainly see on examining the return presented to the House that the officers are quartered on the men. In the last seven years the force subscribed to this fund £98,000. Of this the officers subscribed £7,000 odd, and the men £90,000 odd. How much did the officers and their widows and orphans get out of the fund? The officers subscribed, as I say, £7,000 odd, in the last seven years, but they and their widows and orphans received £22,000 from the fund; that certainly is a very comfortable and lucrative fund for the officers. The men paid to the fund, as I say, £90,000 odd, but only received from it £67,000; so that the officers had taken out three times the amount they subscribed and the men had only taken out three-quarters of what they paid in. I do not wonder the officers wound up their own fund, neither do I wonder that the men, whether they be constables serving in the force, or pensioners outside, are very anxious that this fund should be wound up also. Last year the receipts amounted to £20,000. The officers paid £1,000 of this amount, and the men £13,000. [An hon. MEMBER: £19,000.] No; the rest is made up in another way. Now, the officers who paid £1,000 drew out £4,000, and the men who paid £13,000 drew out £9,000. This is, I think, inequitable and monstrous. If the officers want gratuities for their widows and orphans let them make a fund for that purpose, and let their widows and orphans be paid out of it, and not impoverish the widows and orphans of poorer men. Now, Sir, the pensioners are placed in a very peculiar position; they are still obliged to pay to this fund although an Act was passed in 1883 which practically brought the fund to a conclusion. I suppose the

Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) is aware of the nature of the Act passed in 1883. No man who joined the Constabulary Force after that date is permitted to subscribe to this fund—it is intended that this fund shall die out in course of time. It is now dying out in consequence of the new law; annual payments to the fund being less than the amounts drawn out. Pensioners are obliged, however, to contribute to the fund, whereas men joining the force are not allowed to do so, and yet they are entitled to receive awards. The pensioners are, therefore, obliged to go on paying for the benefit of their widows and orphans; but if a pensioner's wife dies before himself he receives no grant from the fund; if his children die before reaching the age of 18, he receives no grant. If, instead of deductions having been made from his pay compulsorily, he had been allowed to insure his life in some Life Assurance Company, he would have been able to procure an annuity for his old age, and the comfortable allowance for his family in case of his death. I have to asked the Government, will they consent to wind up this fund? They agreed to wind up the officers' fund at the request of the officers; why should they refuse to wind up this fund at the request of the men? This fund is now represented by £130,000 worth of Government Stock. This amount has been piled up out of payments compulsorily made by these poor men, men who could not very well spare the money. I ask the Government to inquire—to send out circulars of inquiry to ascertain—from the 4,000 Constabulary pensioners and the 12,000 men now in the force, whether they desire this fund to be wound up or not; and I ask the Government to act on the plain principle of equity, and, as they have by legislation recognized the fact that this fund must cease, and as they have forbidden the men now joining to subscribe to it, I ask them to carry out their policy to a logical conclusion, and if they find the majority of the constables and police pensioners desirous that the fund should be wound up, wind it up. Whether they wind it up or not, I tell them they will never get 1*d.* in this House for the maintenance of the police without a fight and strong resistance so long as this principle of allowing one official to administer this fund exists. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) may smile; but it is a disgraceful and scandalous system, and one that holds out a premium for dishonesty and the wrongful appropriation of public money to allow any one officer in Dublin, without proper check, to administer a fund amounting to £20,000 a-year. I know how this fund has been applied; I know where a good deal of the money is gone. You say it goes to the widows and orphans of the men; but a good deal goes otherwise. I know, for instance, that in the Barbavilla case, where perjurers were suborned, the men who had charge of the case received grants of money out of this very fund. In that case, Constable Lynch swore that the M'Coans—father and son—had no opportunity of consulting together. That has been discovered to be a falsehood; it has been ascertained, in fact, that they were put together in order that the father might train the son in the lies he had to tell. Lynch swore a false oath; but because of his meritorious conduct in allowing the father and son to come together, and allowing them to manufacture their story, he was rewarded. Judge Lawson said that if the father and son had any means of coming together and concocting their story, it would be a great matter to go before the jury. Lynch, for his meritorious and efficient conduct in the case, and for procuring the conviction and sentencing to penal servitude of 11 men, against whose characters nothing had been alleged, figured for meritorious conduct, and pocketed £15 out of the fund intended for widows and orphans. Now, Sir, we shall press this matter to the uttermost. I have, I think, now opened these questions sufficiently to enable the Government to reply. Before I sit down, however, I should like to inquire what the Government intend to do—this is the 29th of August, and the Session is nearly at an end—with regard to the maintenance of social order in Belfast? My patience in regard to this question is very nearly worn out. The Committee is aware that the Belfast riots took place in June, July, and August of last year; the Committee knows that 40 lives were lost in those disturbances, and the Committee knows that 60 houses were wrecked. Every Member of the Committee is familiar with the fact that Belfast, intermittently for three months, was given up to a carnival of riot and bloodshed; every Member is aware that it took an army of 6,000 soldiers and police to reduce that town to a condition of peace and order; everyone is aware that the cause from which these riots sprung was the stimulus given to political feeling by certain well known gentlemen. Moreover, it is a familiar fact that these were the fourth riots within 30 years in that town—there were the riots in 1857, 1864, 1872, and again last year. We have these riots proceeding from the same cause, continuing to the same extent, involving the same terrible and calamitous loss of life, and the same widespread destruction of property. I questioned the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) on the 24th March last—it was the occasion of the All-night Sitting, as you, Sir, may remember. The right hon. Gentleman was absent during the night, and when he returned, at 11 o'clock in the morning, I drew his attention to the subject. He replied not in detail but in substance satisfactorily, and, under the circumstances, I did not think it was fair to press him to go into details. He pleaded he was new to Office; he pleaded, also, that although four Commissioners had reported, the fifth Commissioner had not; and the right hon. Gentleman pleaded also, not only that the Government accepted broadly the recommendations of the four Commissioners, and was labouring to carry them into effect, but he hoped to proceed to practical action on the subject as soon as possible after the Report of the fifth Commissioner reached him. That Report came to hand on the 25th of March, five months ago. The Report of the four other Commissioners had been presented in January, two months earlier. What view do the Government take of their position as conservators of the peace in Belfast in view of the solemn warnings given by the four Commissioners, and in view of the fact that Belfast is a town in which formidable riots may break out at any moment? What do they think of their responsibility in dawdling along for months and months toying with human life without taking action? Is it to be understood that Belfast is to be given over for another year to its present inefficient system, and no effort made before next Session to legislate on the question? The Commissioners recommended two important improvements—they recommended improvements of an administrative character, and improvements in regard to legislation. One of these improvements was an increase in the number of the police force. What has been done to carry out that recommendation? I know there is a Bill before the House, but what is to be done with it? Is it pretended that in a case of such serious moment the mere fact of a block standing against a Bill—a block by local Members politically interested in the screening of rioters—is to prevent the Government from further attempting to make progress with the Bill? My hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) referred to the case of Head Constable Gardner. This officer was shot dead in cold blood in the streets of Belfast; he left a widow and orphans penniless; but the cunning Corporation of the town of Belfast have so framed their law that the representatives of a soldier or policeman killed in the progress of a riot cannot recover any damages. A Bill was brought in to amend this law; do the Government intend to pass it? Riots may occur this winter, and soldiers and policemen may be killed, but their relatives will be unable to recover damages. If your window is broken you can recover the damage, but if your skull is fractured you cannot; that is the law in Belfast, and this is the law which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary regards in what I may call a languid attitude of mind. Now, on the 21st of March the right hon. Gentleman promised to act immediately in this matter; but here we are at the 29th of August and nothing has been done by way of legislation, and nothing by way of administration. The law remains the same as last year; the police force remains the same; nothing has been done to increase the force; nothing has been done to improve the class of barracks; nothing has been done to establish telephonic communication. The Commissioner, Mr. Wallace M'Hardy, of whom we have so high an opinion, gave page after page of his experiences as a police officer, and made certain recommendations for the improvement of the police system of Belfast; but nothing has been done.

You were ready enough to coerce the rest of Ireland; you were ready enough to pass for districts where there was no crime to speak of, and where the peace is never broken except in the struggle for dear life and home, a code as drastic as ever was enacted for Algeria; but you do nothing for the town of Belfast, where passion runs riot, where property is constantly destroyed, and where Catholics and Nationalists are placed at the mercy of an overwhelming and hostile majority. The majority is composed of your political partizans, the rioters are your supporters; and I cannot wonder that the Government are so supine, that they are unwilling to move in the matter, when I remember that all these riots sprang from the political stimulus imparted by a Member of their own Government. I shall press again and again to-night for assurances upon two points. First, that the administration of the police force of Belfast will be immediately placed upon the basis contemplated by the Commissioners; and, secondly, that the Bill now before this House shall be passed this Session. Why should it not be passed? The Government have been dawdling away the time; they have had the Report of the Commissioners in their hands since January, and they did not bring in their Bill till June, and then, after taking a second reading, they discovered some occult cause for referring the Bill to a Select Committee; then they postponed it week after week, and now the Government, having at their disposal the whole time of the House, plead the half-past 12 o'clock Rule as a reason for not bringing on the Bill at all. The Government accept very heavy responsibility. Their responsibility may not result in any guilt; but, on the other hand, it may do so; there may be a renewal of rioting in Belfast. If the riots are renewed and lives are lost, the blood of the victims will be on their heads. Before I sit down I want to make an inquiry concerning the riots at Portrush. I complain that the Nationalist Foresters of Belfast, some of whom are my constituents, and whom I know to be most respectable and law-abiding men, have been calumniated by Members of the Government. Every year that they have made an excursion they have been assaulted. They cannot go for a day's outing without having mobs of furious partizans lying in wait to assault them. They went to Portrush a few weeks ago; they gave notice to the police of the excursion, in order that their peace might be preserved. This proved their good faith. What happened? A mob was organized in the town of Coleraine. Everybody in that town knew from a very early hour on the Sunday morning that this mob was being organized, and intended to proceed from Coleraine to Portrush for the purpose of attacking the excursionists. They did attack the excursionists. Where were the police; what was the virtue of the notice that was sent to the police; why did not the police act upon it? They stood by, and allowed the attack to be organized, and to be carried out. They never interfered; and then, Sir, when the disturbers of order had had their way, the police arrested men who had been subjected to the attack. I have just received a telegram from Belfast to say that what is called a Loyalist witness, one of the assaulting party, has been committed for perjury. I am here to say that the Foresters, who warned the police of their excursion, in order to prevent an infraction of the peace, are anxious and desirous to have a full and exhaustive inquiry into the merits of the case; and I have to ask the Government whether they will grant an inquiry? If they are not prepared to grant an inquiry, I maintain they are not justified in using their position in this House to defame the character of as law-abiding and respectable a body of men as there is in Ireland. You are ready to prosecute the Nationalist Foresters in Ireland, but you will not prosecute Major Lydwyn, who is a Justice of the Peace in County Tipperary, and who has been engaged for the last seven years in constant litigation with his tenants. He has served on one tenant writs, summonses, processes, and legal documents of various kinds to the number of 108. I want the police to bring this man to justice. He lately trespassed on the holding of a tenant; he brought a body of emergency men with him, and tried to carry out some operation on the tenant's holding. A squabble took place, and a donkey happened to be killed. The magistrate summoned the tenant for the killing of the donkey. The tenant believed he had a right to resist the trespass, but omitted to engage counsel; he was sentenced to three months' imprisonment. When the landlord found the man in gaol, and his wife and nine children helpless at home, he came at 10 o'clock one Sunday morning, when he thought the family would be at church, bringing a body of emergency men with him, and blew up with dynamite, or some other explosive, a small bridge leading from the farm of the poor woman to the public road; and one effect of the explosion was that a stone which was dislodged struck a woman on the temple. The work, however, was not complete. Major Lydwyn returned at 9 o'clock in the evening to complete the destruction of the place by another explosion. He then went to the house of the woman, and used such terrific threats that four neighbours came in, and remained in the house all night, or else it is likely that the woman would have gone mad with terror. What has been done to prosecute this man? He is not a Nationalist Forester; he is a Major who continues to adjudicate from day to day on the Bench at Templemore. I believe that half the time of the Bench is occupied in the hearing of disputes between this man and his tenants.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not see how this question is relevant to the Vote before the Committee. It would be relevant to the Vote for Prosecutions.

MR. SEXTON: This Vote is for the pay of the police, and the duty of the police is to report all outrages. I have not heard that they have reported the outrage I have described. May I inquire from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary whether the police at the adjoining station reported this outrage; and if not, why not; and if they have, what steps will be taken for the maintenance of law and order, and the removal of Major Lydwyn from the Commission of the Peace?

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): We have just listened with great interest to the characteristically able speech from the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). In the course of his speech, the hon. Gentleman referred to the resignation of constables in Kerry and other parts of Ireland. Now, I should like an expression of opinion from the Government upon this matter. I trust the Members of the Committee observed the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) replied to the observations of my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). My hon. Friend pointed out that there was an increase this year in this Vote of £15,000, and that since 1881 there has actually been an increase of £260,000. The right hon. Gentleman says that is not much; but what my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo pointed out was that the increase is continuous, that the Estimate has increased steadily since 1881, and that it has increased considerably during the past 12 months. Surely an increase of £260,000 in a Vote of this kind is a matter sufficiently serious to require the grave attention of the Committee. Now, the average cost of the Irish Constabulary is about 6*s.* 6*d.* per 1,000 inhabitants; that is about twice what it is for the same population in England. The number of constables in Ireland, excluding the Dublin district, is 2·65 per 1,000 inhabitants; including the Dublin district it is, speaking in round numbers, about 3 to every 1,000 inhabitants. In Ireland the number of constables per 1,000 inhabitants is three times greater than in Great Britain. The bare mention of this distinction is enough to excite the attention of this Committee, and to call for the gravest and closest examination of the Estimates which lead to results of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman says that the large amount required for the Irish Constabulary is not greater than the absolute necessity of the case demands. What causes the necessity of the case? what brings about this result? why is such a large Estimate necessary? Ought not this Committee to inquire into these matters just as the head of a business would? We shall make it our business to do so; we shall make it our business to acquaint the people of England with the amount of this Estimate, with the extravagant expenditure of the British taxpayer's money, with the result not of advantage to the country in which it is spent, but of the greatest possible mischief and disturbance of the cause of social order. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to take very great exception to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) with regard to the Irish Constabulary. He said that, no matter what operations they may be engaged in, we, as Irish Representatives, ought to be proud of this body, which everyone thinks is second to none in the world in the qualities usually possessed by large bodies of men. We recognize the intelligence, the ability, and the fine physique of the Royal Irish Constabulary; but what we condemn is the spirit with which this fine body of men is imbued. We condemn the training they receive, and the uses to which they are put. Great exception was taken by the right hon. Gentleman to the remarks of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and the remarks of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), as to the non-detection of crime by the Royal Irish Constabulary. The non-detection of crime by this force is due to the character of the force, to the systematic manner in which men are employed in semi-political and semi military duties. In fact, Sir, the Constabulary of Ireland are not a body of men employed for the preservation of the peace, the conservation of public order, and the detection of crime, as the Police Force of a country should be; but they are a *quasi*-military body engaged to a very great extent in upholding a condition of things which the bulk of the population of Great Britain at the present time condemn. They are, in short, engaged in maintaining a system of land tenure, and in upholding the present system of landlordism, in upholding the system of eviction, and of harassing and annoying the people, which is admitted at the present time to be the greatest of all social questions in this country, and which is admitted to be a scandal to English rule in Ireland. They are not used as a force for the detection of crime. A most striking and significant illustration of this came under my observation not very many months ago in Kerry. Two very smart men came from England engaged upon a very ingenious system of fraud. They represented themselves as engaged in travelling for a firm which was publishing a certain directory. They collected a large amount of money from men in the City of Cork, from men engaged in business, and then they proceeded to Limerick, where they also collected a large amount of money. Two days before these men were arrested in Limerick information was given by two or three men, respectable traders, that this fraud was being perpetrated. The police would not arrest the men, and it is very probable that had it not been that two or three private traders in Limerick on their own initiative stopped the men and detained them, they would have got clean out of the country. We heard shortly afterwards that one of the detectives in Cork who was apprised of the fact, and a constable to whom the information was given, were degraded. The detective was put back into the ordinary uniform of a constable, and the constable was reduced in his position. Why was it that the two men were allowed to go about perpetrating this fraud with impunity? It was because the constables were engaged in other work—in following, for instance, American tourists who visit the country. Every man who wears a wide-awake or resembles a Yankee in any way is suspected at once, and his footsteps are dogged by the police. It is because the members of the force are engaged in work of this kind that they do no other work, and indeed have no taste for the ordinary duties of a police constable—the detection of crime and the maintenance of public order. I think that in addition to explaining to the people of England and to the Committee the enormous cost of this force to the British taxpayer—over £1,500,000 sterling a-year—we should also strive to show its uselessness, and the absolute mischief which it produces in Ireland, and the disturbance of social order which it creates. If any public man goes to Cork in the discharge of a public duty, and he is suspected of Nationalist tendencies—if he goes, for instance, to deliver a lecture or to address a public meeting—the constables seem to seize every opportunity of harassing him and those who may accompany him or meet to welcome him. The chief object of the police seems to be the molestation in every possible way of Nationalists, and of people who are identified with the political opinions which are possessed by the vast bulk of the population of Ireland. A very short time ago a perfectly peaceable and orderly meeting was being held in the City of Cork, no complaint had been made by the local police as to the meeting, and yet at a moment's notice a number of constables, armed with bludgeons and swords, sallied forth and attacked the unarmed and unoffending crowd who were listening to the speeches which were being made. The people were knocked down and otherwise most brutally treated. Many people who were coming from church at the time were included in the attack made by the police. Such proceedings seem to be the conception by the average Irish constable of his duties. None of the Representatives of Ireland yield to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in admiration for the intelligence, the fine physique, and the many admirable qualities which are possessed as a body by the Royal Irish Constabulary. What we object to is the manner in which they are employed, the duties upon which they are engaged. We object also to the enormous amount of money which is expected to be voted in this Committee for the support of the force, while no advantage accrues to the community, inasmuch as the force is used in perpetuating an anomalous and disgraceful condition of things.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland replying to my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) was anxious to know who was responsible for the state of facts existing in Ireland, and which necessitate the maintenance of so large and expensive a force as the Irish Constabulary is. That opens up the whole question of the Government of Ireland, and I do not know whether it would be useful to speculate upon this subject now, but it appears as though the Chief Secretary were prepared to maintain that the Irish Constabulary were politically and morally a particular body of men. Now, I wish to call attention to specific instances of proceedings by the Irish Constabulary to show that they are very far from being the decent and respectable men which the right hon. Gentleman imagines them to be. In the first place, I desire to call attention to the proceedings of the Constabulary at Bodyke evictions, and I do so for the purpose of directing the notice of the Committee to what I consider to be a gross and glaring scandal—namely, the way in which the police are used, not to protect the Sheriff in the discharge of his duty, but to do the Sheriff and his bailiff's work, at evictions. I was present during the whole time that the Bodyke evictions were in progress, and I saw from day to day a great body of the Royal Irish Constabulary, something like 200 men aided by a considerable force of military, form themselves into volunteer parties to break into houses and throttle and wrestle with the people, after which the emergency men came up and did their work. I and others remonstrated with the officers as to the proceedings of the Constabulary, and the reply we received was that the men who were acting in the manner I described were simply volunteers, that they were acting without the orders of their officers, and that the officers were unable to prevent them from volunteering to do this work for the Sheriff and his bailiff. Now, Sir, I refuse to believe that an officer in command of Irish Constabulary has not exactly the same power and the same authority over his men as a military officer has over his men whether in action or at review. The fact is that the officers in command of the Royal Irish Constabulary at Bodyke were perfectly competent to prevent the men doing this work—to prevent them breaking into the houses and seizing the people inside, and it is useless for the Chief Secretary or any other Member of the Irish Government to pretend that this work was not done because I saw it done. I saw constables break into houses before the Sheriff entered, and the best possible proof that the constables did break into the houses is that in every case they were assaulted and they carried away many marks of the violence inflicted upon them, while the emergency men, certainly during the last five or six days of the evictions, were not wounded or touched at all. That is most perfect proof that it was the constables who broke into the houses. I suppose they were not only in receipt of their ordinary pay, but that they received extra pay and allowances, and I believe the Sheriff was quite prepared, out of the funds at his disposal, to compensate them still further for the alleged danger they underwent by breaking into the houses. I altogether object to the Constabulary being allowed to act the part of bailiffs and emergency men at evictions. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has asked who is responsible for these evictions? We have heard people talking of the responsibility for evictions, we have heard the responsibility placed upon the shoulders of members of the National League, but

Lord Salisbury has from time to time referred to harsh and unjust evictions. I have never heard the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary or any other Member of the Government say a word in defence of Colonel O'Callaghan. It is in respect of unjust evictions, such as these which have taken place on Colonel O'Callaghan's estate at Bodyke, that we have been legislating. It was at these evictions that the Constabulary acted for the bailiffs and emergency men, they acted really as housebreakers. To my mind, and from a legal point of view, the police were nothing more or less than housebreakers. They acted in a totally illegal manner, and I am convinced the people inside the houses were morally and legally justified in resisting them just as much as they would be in resisting any other class of housebreakers. Now there is an increase of this Vote. The increase has been continuous. I am not prepared to blame this Government for the increase in the pay and pension of the Constabulary. I blame the last Government, who, in 1883, brought in a Bill to legalize an increase in the pay of the Constabulary. I believe that was a totally unjustifiable Bill. It increased the annual charge for the Constabulary, and, in face of that increase we see there is this year an increase of something like £15,000. Under what sub-head does this increase fall? It falls, oddly enough, on the charge for the transfer of men, and for car hire and extra pay. Now for what purpose, let me ask, was this extra charge of £3,500 incurred for extra pay and £4,500 for travelling expenses? It is perfectly apparent that the only real cases where extra pay is given are cases in which the Constabulary discharge eviction duties, and the only purpose for which Constabulary are sent about the country, except at times of General Elections and occasionally on the 12th of July in the North of Ireland, that is to attend the evictions. We see, that from 1886 to 1887 there has been an increase of £8,000 in these two items. Now, I mean to contest these items one after another, by moving a reduction in respect of both of them; but before I conclude my observations I want to refer to the manner in which the Constabulary are governed, especially with regard to the literature they are allowed to read. A Question was put some time ago in this House to the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman), with regard to the circulation amongst the Irish Constabulary—the gratuitous circulation—of the scandalous and lying pamphlets recently issued by *The Times* newspaper. We are in a position to assert, and we do assert, that these pamphlets were sent from Dublin to the different police stations in Ireland, and that they were circulated gratuitously among the Constabulary. But the Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) in replying to the Question put to him, said, that he believed the Constabulary were allowed to read what literature they liked, and he added that he had seen *United Ireland* in police stations. Now, I have in my hand a letter from an Irish constable, who says that in February 1886 he was reported for buying two copies of *United Ireland.* He admitted the charge and pleaded justification; but the County Inspector recommended his discharge from the force for the offence. The matter was submitted to the Inspector General of Constabulary, but he did not deal with the case for five or six weeks, and then, but only on the application of the constable for a reply, he said, that inasmuch as the constable had obeyed the orders of his officer to discontinue reading or buying the paper, he would take no further notice of the matter. The constable very properly adduced this influence—"I am therefore the only constable in Ireland specifically prevented from reading this paper, if the words of Colonel King-Harman are correctly reported." The fact is, that if a constable was seen reading *United Ireland* he would be instantly dismissed the force. So far as the system of espionage exercised over the constables, that the sergeants search the trunks of the constables under them to see if there is any of this so-called seditious literature in their possession. It is useless to pretend that the Irish constables are allowed to read any kind of literature after that. They are prevented, under pain of dismissal, from reading *United Ireland.* Whereas there are circulated gratuitously for their mental elevation and instruction, pamphlets printed in this country, and circulated in this country, and which the great body of the people of this country now recognize to be scandalous in their nature and totally unfounded in their facts. There are several other points to which I wish to direct attention. There is one with regard to the manner in which Questions are answered by the Chief Secretary. Questions are put in this House frequently with regard to the conduct of the Constabulary on certain occasions. The Chief Secretary or the Parliamentary Under Secretary come to the Table and say that the statements made are totally unfounded, that the police discharged their duties with impartiality, and in a proper manner, and that the accusations made are totally unjust. Well, Sir, from whom do these replies come? They come from the persons who are incriminated. The Chief Secretary or the Parliamentary Under Secretary give the sanction of their position to these replies. It is really the constables, who are charged with certain misconduct, who speak through the Chief Secretary or the Under Secretary. The public outside read the replies and believe that they come from impartial sources. They are merely *ex parte* statements which are made in reply to other *ex parte* statements, and it is absolutely impossible to attach anything like reliance to the answers of Ministers in regard to the actions of the Irish Constabulary. The Constabulary are, I believe, always ready to send up whatever answers they may think agreeable. They are always prepared to send up whatever answers may, in the first place, suit the Ministry of the day, and, in the second place, what will suit themselves. What I want to recommend is that, when charges are made against the Constabulary, there should be some authoritative body in Ireland, distinct from the Constabulary themselves, who would be able to inquire into the truth of the charges. The local Resident Magistrates would be a better authority from whom to obtain information touching the actions of the Constabulary, than the Constabulary themselves. As a rule, Resident Magistrates are in attendance when events of the kind complained of occur. Take the case of evictions. In all instances there are two Resident Magistrates present at evictions where there is anything like disturbance expected. But if any inquiries are necessary they are directed to the County Inspector or to the Sub-Inspector who were present, and these are the men who are directly responsible for the action of the police. It would, of course, be expecting too much from them to ask that they would send up reports which might have the effect of leading to criticism of the action of the police, or lead to condemnation in this House of the conduct of the police under a given set of circumstances. I venture to suggest that inquiries with regard to Questions put in this House should be directed, not to the police themselves, but should be directed as a substitute for the police, though I admit they are a very defective authority, to the Resident Magistrates who preside in the district with regard to which complaint is made. Now, the question which I wish specifically to call attention to is the question of extra pay. I notice that £3,000 for extra pay was set down in 1886-7, and a similar amount for 1887-8, and I wish to know from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary if these two items cover the two General Elections of 1885 and 1886? I assume the item for 1886-7 covers the Election of 1885, and that the item for 1887-8 covers the Election in 1886. If it is true that these items cover the General Elections in question, I may point out that the similarity in the amount is rather peculiar. The expenditure incurred during the Election of 1885 in Ireland must naturally have been very much greater than the expenditure incurred during the Election in 1886, for the very reason that in 1885 there were, I think, more than 80 contested elections, whereas in 1886 there were only 30 contested elections. Notwitnstanding these facts, the extra pay on account of elections and disturbances is exactly the same in both years. The arithmetical similarity in regard to these items is extremely suspicious, but I think that, if I were to go through this Vote point by point, I should be able to discover a great many inconsistencies in the way in which the calculations are made, and should be able to show that the amounts put down are totally unjustifiable, and that the expense of the Constabulary Force is purposely kept up. I think I should be able to show that if the force were properly administered this Vote, instead of showing an increase, would show a substantial diminution. Three or four years ago there were something like 14,000 policemen in Ireland, but, if I am not mistaken, the number has since been decreased. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), when Chief Secretary for Ireland, was repeatedly forced to admit in this House that there were more police in Ireland than there was any real necessity for. There were, as I say, something like 14,000 policemen at that time, and the way in which the men were disposed of was to send them as extra police to the different counties, and, being sent as extra police to the different counties, the counties became liable to a moiety of their charge. It was by this means that the charge on the Consolidated Fund for the Irish Constabulary Force was diminished and that the amount spent in their maintenance appeared to be less than it really was. Certainly if the Constabulary Force in Ireland were properly managed it could be worked at a very much less cost than £1,500,000 sterling annually, which is now practically expended upon it. As a protest against the increased cost of the Constabulary, which is to be attributed to the manner in which the force is used in aiding the landlords of Ireland to evict the people from their homes, I beg to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £3,500, which is set down as extra pay.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That item E—Extra Pay—be reduced by £3,500."—(*Mr. M. J. Kenny.*)

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I should like to reply to the particular point that has been raised by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. M. J. Kenny) before going into the general questions which have been raised by the hon. Gentlemen who are at the present moment absent from the House. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. M. J. Kenny) is not unnaturally puzzled by the increase of £3,500 in the item for extra pay over last year's Estimate. This increase, I may mention to the Committee, is an entirely nominal one, because there was a Supplementary Estimate of £19,800 on account of extra pay due to the recent Election. There is, therefore, rather a reduction in this item than an increase. I may mention to the hon. Gentleman that this must always be rather a matter of conjecture and forecast, and the forecast is based upon the actual expenditure of the previous year for extra duty. I have great hopes of being able, in consequence of the Acts we have passed this year, the Land Act and the Crimes Act, to reduce this amount to a lower figure than it stood at last year. I trust the actual expenditure will not be in excess of the Estimate of expenditure, and that it will not be necessary to come forward next year with a Supplementary Vote based on the exceptional transactions of the autumn and the winter. I think I have explained to the hon. Gentleman how the matter stands. I do not know whether there is any further information I am capable of giving on the subject, but, if so, I shall be very glad to afford it.

Mr. M. J. KENNY: I stated that the circumstances of the two recent General Elections were totally different, and I pointed out that the expenditure for extra police duty in respect of the two Elections was the same.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I should think that the amount spent upon extra duty at election times, as compared with the other expenditure, is comparatively small.

Mr. DILLON: I should like to know from the Chief Secretary if the expenses connected with the suppression of proclaimed meetings will come under this heading?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I should think that any exceptional demand made on the police would come under the head of extra pay.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): As we are asked to vote an increase of £3,500 over the Estimate of last year, I think we may reasonably ask for some further explanation of the item. Having moved about very much from place to place during the course of the last financial year, I can easily understand why it is that the Estimates have been increased. The reason is that Her Majesty's Government, or at least Her Majesty's present Advisers, have certainly employed the police in a most unwarrantable and most unjustifiable manner. I like them to hear what I have got to say about it, and to understand what has occurred. I suppose the police get extra pay for what they have to endure on some occasions like those to which I will have to refer. I suppose they get extra pay for following Parliamentary Representatives about the country—for following Parliamentary Representatives when they, in the discharge of their duty, go to address meetings of their constituents. When Irish Members address their constituents —as happened to me during the Easter Recess—is it right that they should be followed about by police? I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether this practice will be continued as heretofore? I am not speaking of the movements of hon. Members in connection with the Plan of Campaign. When we are engaged upon work of that kind we expect to be followed, and we do not complain of it. On the contrary, I may say for my own part that at times I have felt almost uncomfortable if I did not have the company of three or four policemen on my outside car. I am alluding to the ordinary cases in which Members have addressed their constituents. I attended a meeting early last year at a certain place, merely for the purpose of addressing my constituents. The Plan of Campaign was not in existence in any part of the district, nor was it in existence within 30 or 40 miles of the particular district I was in. When I went down there, we had the usual accompaniment— the Government notetaker, with over 100 policemen, and an extremely amiable young man, a Sub-Inspector of the Royal Irish Constabulary. I observed this Sub-Inspector of Police for a considerable portion of the day, and, as far as I could see, all he did was to endeavour to make himself sick by smoking bad cigarettes. This is the way the police are mostly employed in Ireland—not in the performance of ordinary police duties, but in the carrying out of operations which are intended merely to intimidate the Representatives of the Irish people. It is for that reason that we are now called upon to pay all this money. I ask English Representatives—I do not care on what side of the House they sit—to look upon this matter in a clear and calm way, and say is the demand now made just or not. I would ask Members on both sides of the House to consider the matter; but, unfortunately, there do not happen to be any Members on the Front Opposition Bench at this moment. Notwithstanding that, I say is it right or wrong that we should be called on to pay an increased amount for these things? Just after Christmas I addressed a meeting at Millstreet, and, leaving Millstreet, I drove across the mountains to a place called Ballyborney at half-past 10 oclock at night. If hon. Members would like to know why I went I will tell them. I went there for a little cock-shooting. Well, what happened? Why, the Police Authorities sent over two car loads of police after me, and on one of these cars it happened that there were a couple of policemen whose acquaintance I subsequently made, and they complained to me very bitterly of the hardships they had had to undergo on this journey. They said that their car had been upset three times in their passage across the mountains; so that not only are foolish and unjustifiable proceedings instituted by Her Majesty's Advisers, but they actually put these unfortunate policemen in danger of their lives without any cause. I could, if the House wished it, give them instances galore—as we say in Ireland—to prove my assertion; but I do not wish to weary the House. There is no necessity for giving more cases, for I feel certain that, though the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has little or no acquaintance with the country which we come from, still he must be aware of the fact that money is unjustifiably and unwarrantably spent on the police in Ireland. After all, Sir, however wearisome these topics may be, we must bear in mind that we are here to look into these subjects. We are here in Committee of Supply to see that the money of the country is spent in a proper and justifiable manner—we are here to account to the taxpayers of the country for the way in which that money is spent. I should like the people of this country to understand the ins-and-outs, the byways and lanes, by which Her Majesty's present Advisers pursue this policy of intimidation and outrage in Ireland. The police in Ireland who are to be paid extra this year are, as a rule, chiefly employed in intimidating unfortunate creatures who have not the wherewithal to live, and intimidating them in order to enable a small minority to obtain their incomes. I think, Sir, that the time has come when this sort of method should no longer be pursued in any civilized country, and I think if nine-tenths of the English people could only see for themselves this system of police intimidation, it would no longer continue in Ireland. In saying this I do not wish to impugn the majority of the police force themselves. You have black sheep in every flock; but what I maintain is, not that the police themselves are to be found fault with, but that they are set on in this organized intimidation by Her Majesty's Government, and when Her Majesty's Government have done that they turn round and ask us, forsooth, to pay an increased item for this extra work! Well, Sir, the present Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant is an able young man, and I hope that with diligence and close attention to his business he may yet come to know something about these matters. It is not beyond him; but I think that a Gentleman like him, who is capable of philosophic reasoning, if he will only take the trouble to make inquiries in order to inform his mind, may see his way to correcting many of those evils which now exist. If he will come with me I shall be very happy to show him round, and I have no doubt that the same would be done by others in other districts. If he would only avail himself of these opportunities, I have no doubt he would correct many of the errors we are called on at the present time to criticize, I trust in no extreme or undue manner.

Mr. DILLON: There are two matters which I think can be conveniently discussed at this point in connection with this Vote. I have, on many occasions, brought under the attention of the Committee the fact that the police are very much occupied in Ireland, and that a great deal of money is spent unnecessarily in the way I am about to describe. First, with regard to the suppression of public meetings. A large amount of this "extra pay" which is not relevant to disturbances is for sending large bodies of police to suppress meetings. This course was taken very frequently during the early part of last winter; but as no meetings have been suppressed lately, I will not dwell at any length upon the subject at present. There is another matter which I have on previous occasions endeavoured to direct the attention of the Committee to, and which has now become an established practice in Ireland. It is not the practice in this country or in Scotland; it is, surely, objectionable, and I promise the Government that so long as it is maintained in Ireland I shall never cease to protest against it. The system is this—wherever we hold a public meeting in the open air in Ireland you always send a spy called a Government reporter to take down every word we say. Personally, I have not the smallest objection to the Government incurring expense in this way, because the extra pay of these men will be included in this sum. I have no objection to the Government piling up all the speeches I make in Ireland in the archives of Dublin Castle. Not that these reports are of any use. I asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary the other day to mention a single case of a prosecution based on these reports in which a conviction was obtained. I only remember one case of conviction, and that is not one which could be offered as an answer to my challenge, because this was the case of the conviction of the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) in a curiously unjust manner. My hon. Friend was punished for a speech which he had never made—for words which had been uttered by someone else and which had been put into his mouth. He was convicted and sentenced, I believe, to some months' imprisonment. During the past 10 years there have been no fewer than 1,000 meetings held, at which, I suppose, there have been no fewer than 10,000 or 15,000 speeches delivered. These speeches have been reported and have been transcribed at enormous length by police spies, and are preserved in Dublin Castle. Where they are preserved there I cannot say; but there must be some gigantic apartment set apart for the purpose in Dublin Castle. These speeches are reported and the notes transcribed necessarily at very great expense; but the experience of seven years shows that the reports so procured and transcribed have been absolutely worthless. Only one man has been convicted on the evidence of these police reporters, and in that case, as I have pointed out, the conviction was a failure of justice. The police reporters have been brought up two or three times to give evidence; but the whole thing in such cases has been a fiasco and an absurdity. As far as I myself am concerned, I have no objection in the world to have my speeches reported verbatim by police spies; but what I do object to is that this system involves a great danger, as it lays open the possibility, and in many cases more than the possibility, of serious disturbance at our meetings. What is the system adopted by the police in regard to these spies at our great mass meetings in Ireland? Why, a man fixes himself in the middle of the meeting as a shorthand detective. Whenever I am at one of these meetings and see one of these persons before me, I endeavour to get him on the platform. This I sometimes manage to do; but it does sometimes happen that the feeling of resentment at the presence of a person of this kind is so strong amongst the people attending the meeting that he is refused a place on the platform, even though the request may be made by myself. When that is the case, 30 or 40 policemen form a square round the shorthand writer, and I have not been easy in my mind on such occasions that bloodshed would not occur. On two or three occasions I have known the people on the point of rioting. At Bodyke, for instance, the police square was broken, policemen were upset, and the crowd trampled over many of them, and if it had not been for the efforts of the local leaders, I doubt if many of the police would not have been killed, or, at least, something very serious have happened. I remember attending a meeting last autumn at which there could not have been fewer than 10,000 people present. The meeting was held in a large field, and owing to some omission on the part of the Police Inspector, only some 20 policemen were brought down to protect the shorthand writer. The Inspector insisted upon putting his police spy in the thick of the crowd. I wanted him to allow the reporter on the platform; but he would not do that, he preferred to put the man in the middle of the crowd. Well, what was the result? A man came up—he may have had some drink for aught I know—and rode a horse right at the body of police, and before any influence could be brought to bear to check them, the police ring was broken up, and the members of the force were attacked by 10,000 men—that is to say, they were violently shoved and hustled. In a foolish moment, the officer in charge gave the order for the police to fix bayonets; the clanging and the flashing of those weapons was heard and seen by those assembled, and it served only to infuriate them the more. There can be no doubt in the world that we had not interfered, and by strenuous exertions exercised a moderating influence upon the concourse, every policeman there would have been killed. They were hemmed in; they could not get to their bayonets to use them. If a single drop of blood had been shed by them, not a man in the force would have come out alive. This is a condition of things which exists in Ireland almost every day, and I say it is monstrous to subject the people and those who wish to take part in meetings of this kind, to this continual danger of disturbance, riot, and bloodshed. And that is not all. I would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant how much of this sum for extra pay is owing to the necessity of car hire for the purpose of transporting bodies of police to those very meetings in order to protect their police spies? Whenever we hold a meeting in Ireland, and there is not a police reporter present, the police no not find it necessary to attend in anything like force. That is very well known. There is no use for them. The system adopted by the police authorities, therefore, is an extremely costly one. I will give an instance to prove my point. Last winter I attended a meeting in a remote district of the county of Cavan, some 15 miles up in the mountains. It was a meeting of enormous size. The District Inspector of Police very probably knew that we should have a large meeting. It was in a wild mountainous place, and no police would have come near, or would have dreamt of coming near, had it not been for the police reporter. They were ordered to have a reporter there, and knowing the enormous size of the meeting they concluded that a large force of police would be necessary. A large force of police therefore attended; I do not think it could have taken less than 30 cars to transport them from Enniskillen. All those cars had to be paid for, and this expense, which could not have been less than £50 or £60, was incurred in order to procure reports which, when made, would be absolutely worthless, and would lie mouldering away, for I cannot say how long, in Dublin Castle. I should think the cost would certainly amount to some £50 or £60, because, not only was it necessary for them to hire cars, but they had to feed the police, owing to their inability to obtain provisions from the peasantry.

Can hon. Members conceive anything more absurd? Well, I say again if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will get up and, in regard to the numerous meetings we have held in Ireland lately, point to a single case in which a conviction has been obtained through the reports of those police spies, I shall be content and will promise to say no more upon this matter. But he cannot do so. It is monstrous to continue wasting this money. It is monstrous to continue that which, to my mind, is more important than wasting money, which is bad enough in itself—that is to say, it is monstrous to allow this system of inciting to disturbance, and danger, and bloodshed, and so on. I cannot conceive anything more outrageously disastrous than this system of introducing police reporters into the midst of our meetings, and it must be obvious to hon. Members why I say this. A single blow struck, it may be by a drunken man, under the provocation of the presence of one of those spies, might raise a row which, by no human possibility, could be prevented from resulting in disturbance and bloodshed. It is an outrage upon decency and common sense to allow those things to take place without the possibility of obtaining any real public object, because, as I have pointed out, although something like 1,000 meetings must have been held during the last few years in Ireland, and although thousands of speeches must have been reported, not a single conviction has resulted from all this employment of shorthand writing spies.

Mr. COX (Clare, E.): I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant if it is under this head that the Irish Government pay the police, and others in Ireland, for the purpose of suborning perjury, and the manufacture of informers——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman must be aware that his question is not couched in the manner in which it ought to be put.

Mr. COX: I am referring to this item for extra pay.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not speak of the subject the hon. Member refers to, but to the manner in which he puts his question.

Mr. COX: Then I will not put it in that way; but I will let the Committee determine for themselves in what way it should be put. I desire to bring under the notice of the Committee the question of how some of the money granted under this Vote is spent in Ireland. There is one case in which I am particularly interested. There is a police functionary in Clare named Head Constable Maurice O'Halloran—a name which is frequently brought up in this House. I wish to ask if it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to continue this man in the nefarious work he has been engaged on for some time, and to pay him large sums of money for what, I contend, is suborning perjury? I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman out of what fund that money comes? I hold a letter in my hand, written by this man, Maurice O'Halloran, to a man named Patrick Loughrey, living near Crusheen. The letter is dated 26th November, 1886—that is, November last. In this letter he says—

> "Dear Patrick,—I cannot find the exact time the train do arrive at Portarlington; but come to Limerick Junction on Wednesday, 1st December, 1886, by mid-day mail train. I will meet you there, and arrange where we will go to from there. I will start before you. When you come into town on Sunday post the enclosed envelope to me, and what you will do as to how you will travel. If that day would put you about, you might name Friday, 3rd December, with hour of meeting, at Limerick Junction, at Tipperary. Fearing a disappointment, I take this precaution. I herewith enclose £10 to you.
>
> "Yours sincerely,
>
> "Joseph Cox."
>
> "P.S.—Mind, keep this money close to you; no foolishness; and be sure to write me the letter naming the date and hour you will meet me at Limerick Junction.—J.C."
>
> "You sign your letter 'S. Neylon.'"

I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland if he approves of his minions and subordinates in Ireland writing such letters as that in the name of Members of this House? This is the name of the man to whom the letter is written—Patrick Loughrey, Throckreddan, Crusheen. I asked the right hon. Gentleman what was to be done with the £10 enclosed in this letter, and he replied that if I handed it to him across the floor of the House he would take charge of it. I did not do that; but I think I put it to a very good purpose. I placed it to the fund for the relief of the tenants evicted at Bodyke. I should like to have an answer from the right hon. Gentleman on this point. What I want to know is whether this man is still continued to be employed at Ennis, and if it is the intention of the Government to continue to keep him in a district where he has been a cause, I might say, of a great deal of the crime which has been committed in County Clare? The district of Feakle was one of the most orderly and peaceful districts in Ireland until this ruffian in uniform went into it. It soon ceased to be quiet and orderly under his auspices. It was owing to the representations of the priests and others that he was removed from Feakle, and with his removal ceased all crime and outrage there. Whilst he was there the district was a scene of continual moonlighting and outrage; but, as I say, the parish priest, and a number of others, seeing that he was leading the young men astray, by pretending that he was the only real genuine patriot amongst them — another Corrigan, or rather, another Talbot, who would help them to redress their wrongs—used their influence and got him removed, and with his removal the outrages ceased. Whether he was a patriot or not, the fact remains that during the time he was stationed at Feakle it was one of the most turbulent districts in County Clare, and that when he left it became once more a quiet and peaceable place. Since he left there has not been a single outrage committed there. He is now in Ennis carrying out his atrocious programme. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his functions are not those of a Head Constable, and, whether he should not be confined to those functions, instead of prowling about over the Counties of Clare, Limerick, and part of Tipperary, or for what purpose he makes those journies, if it is not with the object of suborning perjury and inciting to outrage? I would ask whether it is a part of his functions to go round the country endeavouring to manufacture informers? I will not trespass further on the time of the Committee; but I hope we shall be able to get some information from the right hon. Gentleman as to the employment of such characters as this by the Dublin Castle Authorities.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe the observations of the hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the Committee with regard to Head Constable O'Halloran are not strictly in Order, as no doubt the money which would pay the expenses of this man does not come out of this Vote, and does not appear on the Estimates. The hon. Member asks me what O'Halloran is doing at this moment, but I have no information to give him upon that point. I believe this constable is a very useful public servant, and if the hon. Member will put a Question to me on the Paper, I shall be glad to tell him where Constable O'Halloran is now stationed. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) has raised a question of some importance—that is to say, he has raised the question of the attendance of Government reporters at meetings in Ireland. In reply to the hon. Member, I have to say that the reason the Government send reporters to public meetings is because they believe, whether rightly or wrongly, that speeches are made at those meetings which very often are not of a purely political character, and are calculated to promote great disorder. Under these circumstances the Government hold that the best thing they can do is to make themselves acquainted, through some authentic channel, as to what really takes place, and as to what is really said. It is for that purpose, and for that purpose alone, that the Government send reporters to those meetings. The hon. Member asked me, I think, whether there has been any conviction resulting from these reports during the last five or six years. I confess I am not sufficiently acquainted with the past proceedings upon this point to be able to give a specific reply. I may say, however, I do not think it possible for the Government to alter their policy in the matter so long as they have reason to believe that speeches may be made as they have been made in the past, which may lead, however little the speakers themselves may desire it, to riot and disturbance. The question is one of principle as to whether the Government should or should not take the precaution of ascertaining themselves what takes place at these meetings, which they have reason to believe, unfortunately, are not always of a political nature.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): There may be something plausible in what the Chief Secretary says, but from our point of view—and we go to the root of the question—we believe that this extra pay which is taken for the police under this Vote, is the result of perfectly unnecessary proceedings. We believe it to be the result of proceedings which are an utter sham. Everyone, even those who may not be expert stenographers themselves, who attends these meetings in Ireland, and see how the speeches are taken down—who sees one of those reporting constables come up armed with about two dozen pencils all sticking ostentatiously out of the pocket of his tweed coat, and sees him subsequently drawing all sorts of absurd characters, angles of figures all utterly devoid of meaning and incapable of transcription, must appreciate what an utter absurdity the whole thing is. I have heard someone who has seen one of these persons say that by the time he had taken down the name of the speaker, the speaker had finished half his speech, and I scarcely think that that is correct. There is an unfortunate British taxpayer who has to pay the cost of all this, and an unfortunate Irish taxpayer too, who has to share the burden. I think it is time that these taxpayers should understand that they are paying unnecessary for a lot of these ridiculous proceedings in Ireland, and when they do understand this, I believe they will begin to raise objections to this course of proceedings. Now there is no Vote which can be devised in any civilized country which is so prolific of discussions, and what is so likely to lead to discussion as this Police Vote for Ireland. There are a sufficient number of points arising under this head of "extra pay" to afford almost inexhaustible discussion. A Vote for "extra pay" for the Irish police force is a sort of artesian well of Irish grievances down which you can bore thousands of feet. You will always come up with fresh cases. If the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall (Mr. Conybeare) were here, he would be able to enlighten the Committee very considerably upon this matter. I went down a few months ago to attend a meeting of my constituents in West Kerry, in the town of Dingle. During the whole of the present agitation there has probably been no place and no district in Ireland so free from any agrarian disturbance as this district of Dingle. There is in this district a respectable parish priest named Canon O'Sullivan, a gentleman who, from his mental attributes and his high personal qualities, has been able to command the good feeling and to influence the conduct of the people around him. He stands very well with the local gentry, and has discussed many a haunch of mountain mutton with them at the festive board. This gentleman has managed all along to maintain peace and order in the locality. Well, such was my opinion of the position in which this rev. gentleman stood in the regard of the Government and of their police officials, that I thought it would be enough for them to know that he was to preside at our meetings to make them feel sure that nothing in opposition to their views would take place. I believed, as did many others, that knowing that this gentleman was to preside, they would not think it necessary to send a police force to the meeting at all. However, whether the Government took this view or not, they at any rate thought it necessary to send a reporter. My practice has always been for reasons of convenience and in the interests of the safety of these Government reporters—though the proceeding has been somewhat repugnant to my own feelings—to put them upon the platform where even I could do so. If you do not take the police reporter who is attending your meeting on the platform, he posts himself some 15 or 20 feet from the platform with a series of concentric circles of Constabulary around him, and while you are speaking from the platform and looking to the people before you for applause, you see staring you in the face a cluster of spiked helmets, which is anything but a pleasant prospect. Well, on the occasion to which I refer, there happened to be at the back of the crowd a young man looking out of an open window whilst my hon. Friend the Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall was speaking. The spectacle of an English Member making points against the Government was an unusual one, and this young man who was looking out of the window, struck by the novelty of the thing, and no doubt delighted at the new departure, in the exuberance of his feelings cried out now and then when a new point was made, "Take that down, Stringer!" There is nothing seemingly very offensive in this phrase. Stringer is a very ordinary name, but it was considered offensive as describing the fraternity of police reporters, as Stringer was the name of the gentleman who was the forerunner of this class. Well, that young man for merely using that expression in the enthusiasm into which he was led by the hon. Member for the Camborne Division, was prosecuted before a Court composed exclusively of local landlord and land agent magistrates, and he was sentenced to and suffered two months imprisonment for using that expression. I do not call in question the amount of punishment because it is now too late, it has been suffered, and the whole thing is passed and done with. We cannot undo that, but I pledge my word that while I have during the past five or six years attended and spoken at innumerable meetings in Ireland, I never in my life saw a more peaceable, a more unanimous, and of course a more enthusiastic meeting than was the one to which I am referring. There was not the slightest danger in the world of any disturbance occurring. There was no danger of this police reporter being in any way assaulted, but as we were told by the hon. Member for West Belfast this evening, the imagination of the police is extremely lively. The police in the case I refer to, swore that both before and after this expression was used by this young man, there was a swaying of the crowd from one side to the other, and that they interpreted into an attack on the reporter or an attempt to hustle the police. But everyone who is accustomed to meetings of this kind in Ireland knows that this swaying to and fro constantly occurs, and is simply owing to a large concourse of people being packed together so closely. Your open air meetings in England are merely small knots of people collected together compared with the masses which congregate around the platforms in Ireland. Everybody knows that this packed mass in their enthusiasm have a tendency to sway slightly backwards and forwards, and there may have been a time in which in connection with the crowd of which I have been speaking, it may have appeared to an unpractised eye that a disturbance was beginning. The constables swore that there was a swaying and surging movement on the part of the crowd, and that the police had to put their backs against the people. Well, the police are paid for putting their backs against the people, and so long as they were not assaulted and were in no way interfered with they could not have been put in any fear for their lives. Their barracks was only 14 yards away from them. I think it is a most odious thing that people should have imprisonment inflicted upon them for such a ridiculously slight offence, if offence it really was. I heard a friend of mine making a calculation with regard to the ordinary pay and the percentage of costliness in these matters between this country and Ireland in proportion to the population; but it is not the percentage of the costliness of the police in Ireland, as compared with England that we complain of. It is bad enough that we should have to make these large payments compared with the small return we get for it.

The CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. Member that the question before the Committee is the question of the extra pay of the police.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Sir, I was just crossing the boundary into the subject at the very moment you interrupted me. What I wanted to refer to was that we object to this extra pay, not so much on the ground that the Irish police receive more in proportion to the English police, but that they get extra pay for such duty as eviction duty and so forth. A constable gets 2*s.* 6*d.* a-day extra for eviction duty, and for attending meetings such as I have described. A constable has very little to do during the week in Ireland. According to a description I once heard given of him by an English gentleman, all that a member of the Royal Irish Constabulary seems to have to do is to get his coat smudged with whitewash inside the barracks, and to come outside to brush it off. The Government reporter is paid for taking down any speech which I might happen to make to my constituents. Surely the Government cannot think very much of that, it can do them no good, and while it is true it does me no harm. I cannot forget that the public have to pay for it, and to pay heavily for the transcriptions of whole reams of paper. The Irish police reporter has a most beautiful method of his own. If there is any hon. Member here interested in the advancement of the reportorial profession I think it would be well that he should closely observe the style of the Irish police reporter.

He has a most beautiful way of transcribing his notes. He takes the notes of a public meeting on Sunday, and he transcribes his special shorthand notes on Monday morning by cutting out the report which appears in the local journals, and then he swears to the truth of his own notes in the shape of his scissors and paste work. The Committee must not think that the Irish police reporter is going to stick at a trifle, when it is a question of swearing to his notes. Why, he will swear even to the very cough or sneeze of the speaker, and whether the speaker is reported or misreported in the public papers the constables' is there just the same. There has been cases of reports of speeches sworn to in Court, although it has been shown by the shorthand notes and reports of newspaper reporters that the transcript sworn to has consisted of a series of broken sentences linked together by the ingenuity of the police reporter himself. Speeches summarized and made up in this way have been sworn to as accurate reports of speeches. That is the value the British taxpayer gets for his money. I wish we could have some representatives of the British taxpayer appointed for the purpose of going through Ireland in order to see how ridiculously this money is spent in extra pay for the police. There is another point to which I should like to draw attention—that is to say, the charge of extra pay for medical attendance upon the police. I do not know whether the charge for medical attendcomes under this Vote; but if it does I should like to say a word upon it. There is an allowance for medical officers while the police are away on special eviction duty, say for instance at the Glenbeigh evictions. The doctor gets 10*s.* for examining every man, 10*s.* per man for examining 250 policemen once a week, who have nothing serious the matter with them once in half a generation. Although the men are as strong and as healthy as it is possible for them to be, the doctor receives 10*s.* every Saturday for examining them medically. Why it is assumed that the constitutions of these men are likely to suffer, I fail to see, because all they have to do when on this extra eviction duty is to stand around while the crowbar is being used. That seemingly is considered a very laborious and reducing operation, seeing that the medical officer examines each man once a week to see whether his health is suffering. Then there is another matter. The sergeants get proportionately increased pay when they are out on this eviction duty, although their duties on such occasions are much lighter than they are when in barracks. Besides, it is a Godsend to these people, and also to the District Inspectors to be sent upon these expeditions, because they get this extra pay; and, not only that, but they get extra dinners besides sometimes. I remember once a Dissenting clergyman speaking upon a platform in Ireland, and accusing a District Inspector of police, who was there for the purpose of reporting his speech, of being a party to the taking of two heifers from somebody's land in connection with some claim in regard to rent. But if I went into the question of the perquisites of the Constabulary I should probably be out of Order; if it were not so, I could confirm the view put forward by my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). As there are matters to which I wish more particularly to address myself later on, I will not occupy the time of the Committee any further than to say that if Her Majesty's Government will even now at the eleventh hour will—during the Recess, in place of proposing the heroic scheme which they are about to burst upon the people of Ireland—take into consideration and allow themselves to be influenced by the advice of those who know Ireland, and are as disinterested in offering that advice as they are in the Government of Ireland, there would be a probability of shaping the form of Government which is to subsist in Ireland somewhat in accordance with the wishes and desires of the Irish people; and there would be very little need for the discussion, not only of the extra pay for the police, but for any abnormal pay for the Constabulary in Ireland.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I trust that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland will give me his attention for a moment. I do not think that there is any very great grievance in the speeches delivered by hon. Members in Ireland being reported by the police, or by anyone else. I do not think, however, that any reporter, whether police reporter or any other reporter, has a right to thrust to the front place in a crowd, and to get policemen to stand round him, in order to protect him, as this proceeding is calculated, more than anything else, to irritate the people, and to provoke a disturbance. I imagine that a reporter should be no more than anyone else in a crowd, and should be content to take what place he can get in it, without bringing down 20 or 30 constables to support him, and to make what one might almost call a hostile demonstration. I presume the object of the Government in sending these men to our meetings is to get correct reports—at any rate, that ought to be their object, for, if they are satisfied that they cannot get correct reports, they should not send these men to our meetings. It is impossible for these reporters to give correct reports. A man attends one of these meetings, it may be on a cold October or November day; he takes up his place in the crowd, note-book in hand, and has to report proceedings which last from two to three hours. I need not say that it is absolutely impossible for any reporter, even if he is comfortably seated, to report with accuracy for three hours consecutively. Probably not more than three or four reporters in the United Kingdom could do it. I see the right hon. and gallant Gentleman looking up at the Reporters' Gallery, but I think the reporters would confirm the view that although such men as Mr. Pitman might be capable of doing this, very few shorthand writers would be able to stand the physical strain. I believe the reporters in the Gallery come into the boxes every 15 or 20 minutes when they wish to take verbatim reports. Of course they come in less frequently when they have merely to write summaries. As I say, it is impossible for a reporter on a November or an October day to take reports of speeches for two or three hours together without the slightest rest, but that is what these police reporters profess to do. I claim that if reporters are sent to these meetings in this way they cannot be expected to furnish full reports, and, that being so, it is merely extending to those men the greatest temptation to furnish something which purports to be a report, but which is in reality nothing but a vamped-up account of what they have heard. These men know that full reports are expected of them; they know they will be punished, directly, or indirectly, if they do not furnish something which has the appearance of a full report; and the result is that they get the newspapers the next day, and with the aid of cuttings therefrom, and their own scrappy notes, they prepare something which is sent down to Dublin Castle, and is there kept in the archives, to be acted upon, if necessary, by the Irish Executive. We had an example of that sort of thing in the case of the four Members of the Irish Parliamentary Party who were prosecuted for conspiracy. We had a number of these police reporters as witnesses. Their notes were produced. One man in particular, Sergeant Christopherson, produced his notes, and read a transcript of them to the Court. The Court ruled in some extraordinary plea that the defendants were not entitled to compel him to read from his notes, so that he read from the transcript. He swore that he had taken down every word of the speeches in his notes, and that he had transcribed from his notes everything that had appeared in his transcipt. Unfortunately, my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) was one of the examining Counsel, and he and my hon. Friend the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) are both expert shorthand writers. They called for the witnesses notes, and when they were produced, the first thing my hon. Friend discovered in them was a hiatus where there was no hiatus in the transcript that the witness had read. The witness was cross-examined that he had supplied the hiatus himself, and that he had read no newspaper report whatever until he had read his own notes, and prepared his transcript and sent them to the Police Authorities. Well, we got the shorthand notes of one of the newspaper reporters who had attended the meeting in question, and what happened? Why it turned out that this man had dropped a sentence, and he had taken from *The Freeman's Journal* a sentence to supply the place of that which he had dropped. It was my duty to instruct Counsel to apply for a summons against this man for perjury; but, as is the general rule under such circumstances the application was refused. This man stood guilty as clearly as any man ever did in this world of perjury. In Green Street he went back upon his original story, and he admitted that he had *The Freeman's Journal* report, and said that in writing his transcript he might have written it partly from recollection of the speech, and partly from his notes, and that his mind might have been affected by reading *The Freeman's Journal* report—a circumstance, mind you, which he denied before. As I have already said, I do not object to the presence of reporters at meetings so long as their presence does not irritate the people, and stir them up to creating a disturbance. I complain that, as a rule, they take up the most aggressive position. I do complain, however, most seriously of the character of the reports that are produced. I complain of one man being expected to take the notes of speeches for two or three hours consecutively on a cold afternoon, and to such notes being used for the purposes of prosecution. And I do most seriously complain of those men being permitted to read newspaper reports and to vamp up transcripts from these reports and their own scrappy notes. I ask for a pledge from the Government that those police reporters shall be forbidden to read newspaper reports of the meetings they have attended—I ask that they shall be forbidden to read newspapers until they have written their own reports to the police officer. The next thing I ask is that the Government will not almost force a man, I will not say to commit perjury, because they may not be sworn as to the reports they make, but I will say compel them to be guilty of deceit in saying that they have prepared an accurate report when by putting them in a crowd for two or three hours on a winter's day and requiring them to take shorthand notes for that time, you have placed him in a position in which it has been physically impossible for him to take an accurate note. I ask for an assurance on these two points, and if the Government cannot give me one or both I would press them for an assurance that they will not permit their police reporters to read newspaper reports of meetings they have attended before sending in their own transcript; and I trust that upon that point I shall receive some assurance.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. M. HARRIS (Galway, E.): This item for extra pay seems to me a very indefinite one by the word "etc.," after it, at the end, which may mean anything. I believe there is not a force in the world so thoroughly demoralized as the Royal Irish Constabulary owing very much to the large amount of extra expenses which they get in various ways. The men are so highly paid and have so little to do that they become almost helpless from over-feeding. You cannot get them to go half-a-dozen miles without a jaunting car; and very many of them in order to keep themselves in health devote themselves to the amusements of fishing and shooting. They receive extra expenses for looking after elections in Ireland, though why, I do not know, because near almost every polling booth there is a police barrack. In the Division in which I live, especially in the town, we have the headquarters of Constabulary, both horse and foot, and within a circle of six miles there are 11 police barracks. Well, you would think that those men ought to be able to look after elections without requiring any extra expenses for performing that duty. They ought to be able to do so in my Division, even though there were no more police than those I allude to. As regards disturbances, I believe that they are mainly owing to the action of Government officials themselves, because if, instead of sending policemen to those meetings to make reports those officials would send some of Gurney's men, no objection would be taken to them by the people, and respectable reports would be supplied. In some cases the Government have done this, and the result has been that there has been no question of the man's rights to attend on the platform. When you bring a policeman to report those meetings, as my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) has said, there is always great danger of a disturbance occurring, because the presence of those men is always a great source of annoyance and irritation to the people. On one occasion I went to Portumna for the purpose of attending a meeting in my Division. When I went there I could not get accommodation, or the only accommodation I could get was in a house which was entirely opposed to anything like agitation. That was owing to the fact that the police had come in force. On another occasion in Connemara I was present when a disturbance did take place. The meeting was in a very remote district of Connemara, near Clifton. It was a case of eviction. There was only one man to be evicted, who was a farmer, but the people collected round him, and very foolishly imagined that they would be able to resist the police; but, fortunately, Father Rattigan came on the scene, and with his efforts, together with such aid as I could myself afford, a disturbance was prevented. Most of the people were women and children, and on the other side were 100 of the Royal Irish Constabulary all armed to the teeth. I went to the people and endeavoured to prevent them from flinging stones at the police; but the only result was that one of the policemen ran after me with his bayonet fixed, and I was nearly losing my life in consequence of my efforts to quell the disturbance. On another occasion at a public meeting at New Bridge on a fair day, when there was plenty of drinking going on, the Constabulary who were present indulged freely, and when I got up to speak they were all drunk, the Stipendiary Magistrate being more drunk than anyone else. I called attention to this man's conduct some time afterwards, and he was suspended and dismissed altogether for his behaviour on that day. The police behaved in a most riotous and violent manner. They arrested me on the platform and brought me into Portumna, and it was only by the greatest efforts on my part that I prevented a collision between the police and the people. Now, as a matter of fact, the people who attend those meetings are far more anxious to preserve the peace than either the police or the authorities who send them are. For my part, I shall vote against every shilling given by this House for the support of the police in Ireland. We can do with one-tenth of the present force of Constabulary, if the views of the Irish Members were regarded. If the suggestions of hon. Members who sit on these Benches were regarded by the Government we could do without this force; but as things are we have a policeman at the corner of every street, at every cross road, and two or three in every village. There is no more peace-loving man in the world than I am, but I must protest against this extra charge for the police. I trust that this Amendment will be carried to a Division.

MR. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): Some of these police reporters vamp up speeches from their own notes, which are very inaccurate, and from the reports which appear in local newspapers, and sometimes they supply what purports to be a report, but which in reality has never been uttered by anybody. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who is now in his place, will inquire into the case of Sergeant Christopherson he will find that he deliberately committed perjury in giving evidence against my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). What is wanted is, first, that a general instruction should be given to the men not to read a newspaper report before transcribing their notes; and, secondly, that where the notes are taken for the purposes of a prosecution a single reporter should not be sent down. Just remember what he has to do. Possibly in very cold weather he would have to stand in the centre of a crowd with a note book in his hand for three or four hours at a stretch. He cannot be expected to take a full and accurate note under such circumstances; at least two or three reporters should be sent down, so that they might adopt the usual course of shifts; you would thereby secure reports a little more reliable. I trust that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland will assent to this being done.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): The hon. Member has complained that he cannot get answers from Ministers; but this is the first opportunity I have had of speaking on this subject. He asks the Government that the reporters should not be allowed to read the newspapers until their shorthand reports are transcribed. Now, I think that most certainly the reporter ought not to do so, and a report made under such circumstances ought not to be accepted. I have no doubt whatever, if instructions have not in the past been given to that effect, they will now be given, and I should imagine that any man who was found refreshing his memory in such a manner would not be employed on like work again.

Mr. CHANCE : You cannot find them out.

Colonel KING-HARMAN : And, as far as I understood the case referred to, on the man being made to read his notes they showed a remarkable difference from the newspaper report; and, fortunately for the gentleman then on his trial, his counsel—being men of great ability—detected this at once, and made the most of it. As regards sending down two or three reporters, the hon. Gentleman spoke about one man not being able to go on two or three hours. But he must be perfectly well aware that if a meeting does last three or four hours only one or two of the speeches require to be reported verbatim—a man sent down is not expected to take every word that is uttered. I can assure the House that every care is taken by the Government to ensure that the reporter sent down shall act in a most satisfactory and straightforward manner, and shall act fairly towards every person.

Mr. CHANCE: I think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is under a complete misapprehension as to what occurred at the trial referred to. I am referring to the evidence given by Sergeant Christopherson. I myself got the original notes and the newspaper report, and on going through the speech of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) with the sergeant I found that there was hardly a single sentence accurate. He had left out two or three sentences at a time, and I preserved as a curiosity the front page of the Government print of the transcript with my corrections and interpolations marked on it. A more difficult draft for anyone to decipher could hardly be imagined. On the second point raised by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, the sergeant, who was the only police reporter called, admitted that he had used the newspaper reports in order to refresh his memory, and I certainly am accurate in stating that the great majority of the police reporters who were examined in Green Street in the proceedings which led to the abortive trial admitted that they read the newspaper reports long before they made their transcripts. It is their invariable practice, and they are almost bound to do so. It is impossible for any shorthand reporter, with, perhaps, an exception in favour of two or three in the United Kingdom, to stand in the middle of a crowd surrounded by police holding a note book in his hand, to report with any attempt at accuracy, or any attempt at sensible condensation, for a space of two or three hours. Any shorthand reporter knows that it is an absolute impossibility; yet these men are sent down there and charged to bring back an accurate report; they must get mixed in taking notes for two or three hours under such circumstances, and in their struggle to read their notes they are bound to have recourse to the newspaper reports. It is undesirable, in the first place, to send a single man down to take notes for two or three hours at a stretch, and, in the second place, to allow him to read the newspaper reports and to fabricate an alleged shorthand report from them. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has given us no pledge. I allege, without fear of contradiction, that if not every one, at least a great majority, of the Government shorthand reporters admitted on the State trials that they had used the newspapers to refresh their memories. That is a most improper practice. It is admitted to be so, and yet in face of that I am merely given a delusive answer on the false assumption that only one man admitted having done so. That is the answer given me, instead of a direct and satisfactory undertaking; and now, therefore, I must appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for such an undertaking, so that in the future no political opponent of the Government in Ireland will be sent before two Resident Magistrates, who are creatures of the Government, liable to dismissal at will, dependent for the bread to put into their mouths and the clothes to be put on their backs upon the Government; and I therefore say it is necessary that these men should have no chance of convicting on improper evidence. I know very well that if these reporters go up with evidence which may be vamped-up or otherwise, it will be received as if it is true. I desire to prevent that being done; and I think that if the Government will act fairly towards their political opponents they will give a straightforward, manly, and unqualified pledge to prevent any chance of such a thing occurring. Up to now they have failed to do so, and therefore I shall move, Sir, that you report Progress, unless I get a satisfactory answer. I do not wish to do so now, because I believe that I have justice on my side; but I again warn the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that if he does not give me this pledge I will make the Motion I have stated.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know what is the nature of the pledge which the hon. Gentleman desires to get from me. One aspect of this matter appears to have escaped his attention. I apprehend that in a speech that is made the subject of judicial consideration there are two considerations which influence the decision arrived at—namely, one the general tenour of the speech, and the second the actual verbatim words on which the trial takes place. I imagine that never the whole or even the greater part of any speech is brought into Court word for word as grounds for an indictment.

MR. CHANCE: If the right hon. Gentleman will read the charge of Mr. Justice Murphy to the jury of the county of Dublin, he will find it laid down as undoubted law tha the jury are to disregard any specia paragraphs or sentences picked out from the speech, but that they are bound to consider the whole speech and the tenour of it; and in the case of a speech which is proved to have been inefficiently reported, such as was the case in regard to the reports of Sergeant Christopherson, then the jury are directed to disregard it altogether, and not to be led away by it for one moment. If any words are found to be inserted in the transcript which do not appear in the original note, then the speech ought to be rejected.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am not lawyer enough to know whether a mistake in a single word is sufficient to quash an indictment.

MR. CHANCE: The whole speech is never alleged in any indictment.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is just what I am stating. The general tenour of a speech is undoubtedly the matter which is to be considered, as well as certain separate parts of the speech which are reported verbatim—[Mr. CHANCE: No, no!] The hon. Gentleman argues on my side. I was going to point out that even if his allegation be correct about the general tenour of a speech, the important portions of the speech ought undoubtedly to be reported verbatim by the Government reporter. But he is also supposed to give the general tenour of the speech. Without question, the Government reporter would not send in an absolutely verbatim report of every speech which may be delivered in his hearing; but he is a perfectly competent witness as to the general tenour of the speech, and as to the character of the general arguments used. As to the legal aspect of the question, I must leave that to the lawyers. But it does appear to me that an actual verbatim report of a speech from beginning to end is not required for an indictment framed under the Act, and it is quite clear that a reporter present during the whole of the speech is a perfectly competent witness as to the tenour of the speech, and as to the character of the arguments used, as well as to the exact words used on special occasions. Now, Sir, the hon. Member has asked me whether I will give a pledge that a direction shall be given to every shorthand reporter never to look at any other report before he transcribes his own notes. As I understand the matter, when a shorthand reporter is examined as to his report, he has to say, upon oath, whether or not he heard particular passages, or the whole speech on which the indictment is framed; and that is the evidence which is expected from the shorthand writer. The hon. Gentleman appears to assume that the shorthand writer may possibly commit perjury. If he would do such a thing, of what use is it to give a general direction to him as to his transcript? Is it not apparent that a shorthand writer who is so lost to all sense of duty in the matter as to swear in Court that he heard certain things which do not appear upon his notes will not be bound by any general directions given by the Government? The hon. Gentleman will, therefore, get but a very small safeguard for the clients he wishes to protect by exacting the directions he desires to obtain. I have no objection whatever to telling him that I will give a pledge to direct that any shorthand reports given by any shorthand writer shall be from his own notes, and shall not be made up from the reports which appear in newspapers. It is clear that the writer's transcript ought to be an exact copy from his own notes; and I am, therefore, perfectly prepared, on behalf of the Government, to give a general direction that the shorthand writer, when he sends in his report of a speech to the Castle, shall send it in on the strength of his own notes only. I hope that that pledge will satisfy the hon. Member.

Mr. CHANCE: I fancy that the right hon. Gentleman is wrong as to the position he has taken up. If the shorthand reporter fails to produce a verbatim report of the speech he is sent to take a note of, I submit that, although technically he may be a competent witness as to the general tenour of the speech, he cannot be accepted as a competent witness on the point of the words used; and, therefore, his evidence would be completely valueless, or, at any rate, of far less value than the evidence of a person who attended and did not take notes. If a shorthand report is produced it should be nothing but a transcript of the shorthand notes, and the Government ought to rely upon the very words alleged to have been spoken according to those notes. The general impression of a policeman certainly ought not to be submitted to a jury; and I have the dicta of Mr. Justice Murphy in support of the view that it would not be sufficient to support an indictment for perjury to produce a witness who swore that he heard the person prosecuted say such-and-such a thing; it was incumbent upon the witness to prove every word which had been uttered before prosecution for perjury could be maintained. What is required is that the shorthand reporters shall be guarded from the temptation of vamping up their reports from the newspapers. I am not putting this forward as a purely imaginary danger. It is a danger which exists. It existed in every one of the men examined at the trial of my hon. Friends the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien) and the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and it is a temptation which should not be allowed to exist. The right hon. Gentleman says a man who would perjure himself on this point would not follow out any directions of the Government. There is a certain element of strength in that argument, provided the right hon. Gentleman assumes that shorthand writers will perjure themselves; but what I say is that he should deprive the shorthand writer of the power of getting hold of the newspaper reports before he makes his transcript. That is a very simple point. The police are well under control, and I do not see any difficulty in giving the direction I ask. Unless the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will assume a more independent and satisfactory position on this subject, I shall be compelled to do that which I suggested a few moments ago.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I hope my hon. Friend the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance) will not find fault with my statement that the real gravity of the situation is this—that incompetent reporters are employed to take reports of speakers, on the transcript of which the speaker may be prosecuted. I do not believe anyone would expect a Government reporter, standing in a crowd surrounded by an escort of police, would be able to take a verbatim note of a meeting extending over two or three hours, as the case may be. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland must have been convinced by the laugh in the Gallery that it is an utterly impossible feat for anyone situated as a Government reporter is to furnish a verbatim report of speeches delivered at a meeting extending over two, or three, or four hours. We have had an illustration this very day that this is actually attempted by Government reporters. It is not that they are asked to furnish verbatim or correct reports of the speeches of the principal speakers at meetings; but they attempt far more. I have seen the reporters' pencils travelling over reams of paper long after the principal speakers have left the platform, and when minor speakers have been addressing the meeting. A man of great respectability in the town of Mitchelstown has been served with a summons to appear before two Resident Magistrates next Monday, in company with my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), to answer for a speech he made on Friday week. His speech was probably the third or fourth in order at a large meeting. This case affords an instance of the danger we are endeavouring to point out. This Government reporter will come forward, and I have not the slightest doubt he will be able and ready to prove to the complete satisfaction of two Resident Magistrates that certain words were used by Mr. Mandeville on the occasion in question. Mr. Mandeville runs the risk of getting a certain term of imprisonment for the speech, the sense of which may be completely misinterpreted by the Government reporter. The present Mayor of Cork was sentenced to two months' imprisonment with hard labour for the delivery of a speech which was utterly and entirely misrepresented by the Government reporter. All we ask is, that if reporters are to be sent to meetings, and if their reports are to be accepted in evidence, only competent men should be employed. It is a notorious fact in Ireland, or, at any rate, in the South of Ireland, of which I have personal knowledge, that policemen who presume to have an acquaintance wilh shorthand, who may have a greater or lesser acquaintance with shorthand, but who are not faithful or accurate shorthand writers, are sent to meetings. Perhaps they only divested themselves of their uniform a day or two before. They are entrusted with a large amount of power over the liberty of the men whose words they are taking down. My hon. Friend the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance) quoted a case which is now very well known. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) replied that that case showed that it is impossible for a reporter to come forward and commit perjury, or to vamp up his transcript by reference to *The Freeman's Journal* or some other newspaper. That is not the case. In the very case quoted, if it had not been for the fact that the counsel for the prisoner happened to be experts themselves—happened to know shorthand particularly well, and were enabled to deal with the matter from a technical point of view—the probability is that the case would have gone against the prisoner. I believe that it was at the second sitting that it was shown that Sergeant Christopherson had entirely misrepresented the speech; that he had written words in a so-called transcript that had never been uttered at all. As a matter of curiosity, I have got into a corner at meetings, and watched the proceedings of the Government reporters. I find them ostensibly writing away for their lives; but in reality they are not taking notes at all. The notes were neither those of Pitman's system, or of any other shorthand system. On the contrary, their proceedings were a mere make-believe. Now, Mr. John Mandeville, as I have said, has been served with a summons, and he will have to submit himself to the tender mercies of a Resident Magistrate in a few days' time. It is quite possible that the transcript, upon which the proceedings have been instituted, has been vamped up from one or other of the local papers. Now, Sir, I should like to be clearly understood upon the matter. I do not want to accuse anyone in the capacity of a Government reporter of wilful and deliberate perjury; but the temptation to men in the position of Government reporters to do their duty, or what they consider to be their duty—that is, to support the case of the Crown—is so great that we can have no faith or reliance that the Government reporter will not be induced to stray from the path of rectitude, rather than run the risk of being denounced for incompetency. It is an acknowledged fact that frequently the Government reporters in Ireland do furnish reports which are neither accurate nor faithful, nor contain the meaning of the speakers. We know from painful experience that many cases of misreporting have occurred—that instances are only far too numerous in which policemen, from a sense of duty, have committed perjury. What we want is a guarantee that competent reporters only will be employed; that policemen who have but a very small acquaintance with shorthand will not be sent to meetings, and be asked to undertake the difficult duty—a duty requiring a great deal of experience and cleverness—of recording speeches made at political meetings, the report of which speeches may be produced in evidence against men by persons who are prejudiced against the prisoners, and prejudiced against every man who espouses the National cause.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): My hon. Friend the Member for East Galway (Mr. Harris) suggested that one of Gurney's men should be appointed to attend Nationalist meetings on behalf of the Government in Ireland. My hon. Friend must have forgotten that the employment of policemen as reporters was a necessity of the case. That was in consequence of the failure to get any other sort of men to report speeches in Ireland for the Government. It is well known that no man connected with the Press in England or Ireland would do the dirty work of Dublin Castle in this matter. It was because they found that out during the land agitation that policemen were, with a very short experience of reporting, and probably with no experience at all, imported into the service of the Government. Of course, if there was an objection at that time on the part of Pressmen to do this work, there is an equal objection now. As a person connected with the Press myself, I imagine there is not to be found in England, Ireland, or Scotland a single man employed on any journal, whether it be Tory, Whig, Liberal Unionist, or Radical, or in the employment of any association formed for the purpose of reporting speeches, who would undertake the dirty work. The suggestion of my hon. Friend the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance) seems to be impracticable. That suggestion is that directions should be given by the Government to policemen not to consult newspaper reports until after writing out their own notes. Why, as the Chief Secretary very fairly points out, if a policeman is inclined to perjure himself, he will not shrink from disobeying such a direction. I have not the least doubt that a police reporter who will deliberately put into his transcript words which the speaker has never uttered, or leave out words which have been uttered, in order to advance the interests of the Government, will disobey the direction not to consult a newspaper report before writing out his notes. It seems to me that what the Government ought to be asked to do is to insure, by some examination, that the men employed shall be real shorthand writers. Let the men employed as Government reporters be examined. The Government have already set up an establishment in Ireland, which is known throughout the civilized world as the Informers' Home. This establishment has been in existence for several years, and a Vote is taken every year in respect of it. Let them now supplement this establishment. Let them build an additional wing, or take additional houses in the same neighbourhood, and lodge in them a corps of Government reporters, especially trained for the reporting of the speeches of Irish Nationalists. We shall have in Ireland another Institution peculiar to the country; and everyone will see what a pretty thing Constitutional Government in Ireland is if there is on one side of the street an Informers' Home and on the other an Institution for the training of Government reporters. I commend this suggestion to the Government. I feel so enamoured of it myself that if the hon. Member for South Kilkenny does not move to report Progress I will do so, in order that the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) or the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland may have time to consider it. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) stated that the case of misreporting mentioned by my hon. Friend (Mr. Chance) was only detected by the fact that the counsel employed for the defence were men who had been reporters themselves, or who had a practical acquaintance with reporting. We know perfectly well that if similar assistance had been afforded in all cases during the last seven years, it would have been found that there was misreporting in every case in which a transcript was submitted to a jury. It is impossible it could be otherwise. These reporters were never trained to report, and there is not a single man amongst them who can report a speech. There is not a single one of them who has not been seen by us to hold his hand helplessly for several minutes, because he is not sufficiently practised in the art. There is not a single one of them who does not vamp up his transcripts by consulting newspapers. A very remarkable instance of this was mentioned the other day in a letter written by a reporter of one of the daily journals. He said that in the report he made of a meeting in County Kerry he mis-spelt the name of a river in the neighbourhood of Tralee. He consulted afterwards the report of one of the speeches at that meeting submitted to a Judge and jury in Dublin. He did so for the purpose of seeing whether the same mistake which he had made occurred in the report of the police reporter. Curiously enough, the speech was identical in every respect, including the mis-spelling of the name of the river near Tralee, clearly showing that the Government reporter did not take notes himself, or else that he cast aside his own notes, and adopted the report in *The Freeman's Journal.* I rose, however, to say that, in my opinion, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland will be regarded by the police reporters in Ireland as one containing directions for their future action. I understood the meaning of that speech to be that the Irish police reporters are now told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—their master for the present, and, I suppose, for some time to come—not to report any speech verbatim. [MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No.] Yes; I am giving the substance of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. The inference to be drawn from the speech is that no police reporter is to be expected to report a speech verbatim; he is to report speeches as speeches in this House are reported—some speeches are to be reported in the third person, and others are to be given verbatim—and what is to be submitted to a jury is the general tenour of a speech, or such passages from the speech as the police reporter thinks important. Now, after reading the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, a police reporter will say—"I can report meetings precisely as I like, and as I know my masters in Dublin Castle will like. I will not give a verbatim report of the passages of a speech which will tell for the prisoner; but I will give a verbatim report of the passages which will tell against the prisoner;" and I do not wonder he should expect a conviction if this code of regulations is carried out. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary upon his singular frankness in this matter; his views will be made known to the policemen of Ireland. I undertake that they shall be made known also to the English people; and I will undertake, as far as I possibly can, to make them known, and to strive to induce others to make it known, that here in this House of Commons the Chief Secretary for Ireland rose in his place to advise police reporters to adopt a system of reporting which has not been heard of in any civilized country, and which is a disgrace to any Government.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): I was present at the trial referred to.

MR. CHANCE: You were not present in the Police Court at all.

MR. GIBSON: I was present at the trial in Green Street when a great number of Constabulary shorthand writers were examined and cross-examined. It has been alleged by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn) that these police shorthand writers write a system of shorthand that is totally unknown, and that practically they only play at shorthand writing; that in reality they do not write anything that can be understood, either by themselves or by anybody else; but that afterwards they write a transcript from local and other papers.

MR. FLYNN: What I said was that I had not seen these reporters reporting minor speeches, or making pretence to report minor speeches.

MR. GIBSON: I understood the hon. Gentleman said that these shorthand writers were not competent because they were not able to write a proper system of shorthand. What I saw in Green Street was this—there were eight or ten shorthand writers produced. The reason the Government employ Constabulary shorthand writers is substantially what was stated by the hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy)—namely, that it is impossible without incurring enormous expenditure to bring shorthand writers; besides, it is very likely that it would be impossible to secure ordinary shorthand writers who would be available at all times to go to meetings required to be reported. We should have to keep up a great staff of shorthand writers, and ordinary Press shorthand writers might not be available. The only alternative, therefore, is to have police shorthand writers, or no one at all. Granted that there was no one at all to report these speeches, these speeches would be made with perfect impunity—it would be impossible to prove from reports of speeches in newspapers that anyone uttered given words. As I say, there were about seven or eight shorthand writers examined at the trial in Dublin, and these witnesses were subjected to a very severe test. The trial lasted several days, and it so happened that these police witnesses had to produce their original shorthand notes, and a very unusual thing occurred, which I suppose has never happened in any previous trial. The witnesses were examined by counsel who were accomplished shorthand writers themselves, and who were not only able to read their own notes, but to read the shorthand written by others. The counsel required the police witnesses to read what they had taken in shorthand, and the witnesses did read out page after page of their original shorthand notes. That, I apprehend, was good evidence that the witnesses did write a shorthand system—Pitman's or some other, which was intelligible not only to themselves, but also to the counsel examining. It is impossible to suggest that these speeches had been transcribed in cold blood from the local newspapers, because there is a peculiarity which has been observed in the speeches reported by local and other newspapers. Some of the more spicy and dangerous passages are omitted in the reports which are found in certain newspapers. It is alleged that the Constabulary witnesses did not take proper notes; but it is a strange thing, if this is true, that their transcripts contained important passages which did not appear in newspapers. There were, as I say, a great number of these witnesses examined at the trial in Green Street, among them appeared to be men of experience and able to write a practically verbatim note. I do not say they could write an exactly verbatim note, because everyone who is acquainted with shorthand knows perfectly well that to take a verbatim note is nearly impossible. [*A laugh.*] The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) is incredulous about that—perhaps he has had no experience. When I say a practically verbatim note I mean that *The Times* note, for instance, is not verbatim, but substantially so. Anything else would be impossible. Now, after the ordeal which the police witnesses went through in Green Street, nobody can have any doubt that they knew shorthand, and that they were capable shorthand writers. The able counsel who examined them entirely failed to shake their evidence. If there was any doubt about the matter, how could it come to pass that not a single independent shorthand writer was called on behalf of the defendants to contradict the police in any material particular? Some observation was made about one of the police witnesses, called Sergeant Christopherson. No doubt he was able to write shorthand and to read it; he has reported a great number of speeches. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance), who was solicitor in the case, will recollect that Sergeant Christopherson took a greater number of speeches than any of the other witnesses. It so happened that in one of his notes there were a line and a-half he was unable to read. The notes he had made were imperfect, and he had taken from a paper a passage he supposed to be the passage he could not transcribe. I suppose he did this a few days after taking the notes, and that he thought that the passage contained the substance of what was said. Now, the line and a-half which was taken by him to supply the passage which was admittedly defective in his notes is used here to convict Sergeant Christopherson of having committed perjury in every single line of the note he took. I do not know whether there are any other matters for me to deal with with reference to what has fallen from the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy), I think it was, said that no man would do this dirty work except the police. Well, it is a very strange thing that everyone who is connected with the enforcement of the law in Ireland is to be denounced, notwithstanding that he does his work thoroughly and in the face of day, and at the peril of his life. By what contortion of the English language can it be said that a policeman who attends a meeting under circumstances of great discomfort to himself, under circumstances of great odium and possibly of danger, in order to do the work of a responsible Government, is to be denounced as a spy. An individual policeman may be a bad man or a foolish man; but, at any rate, a policeman who attends those public meetings in Ireland for the purpose of taking shorthand notes is certainly not a spy, no more than a lawyer or any other person engaged in the administration of the law or in the conduct of a legal inquiry. In reply to the hon. Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn), I admit in the frankest and fullest way that it is the duty of everyone concerned in this police reporting to try and examine the substance of the words in order that it may be proved beyond a doubt, because it is a serious matter to convict anyone by the words he has spoken, the words he has used in his speech. In certain other matters, no doubt, it is necessary to prove a fact with great minuteness; but in the case of words spoken, all that it is necessary to get, in order clearly to establish guilt, is the substance of the utterances, and when that substance is clearly demonstrated, I do not see where the difficulty can be in establishing guilt—where it is clearly proved that the language was used with a deliberate intention. I think the only thing we can look to in these matters is the procuring of efficient shorthand writers, and it is a matter of no great importance whether they are policemen or otherwise. The examination of witnesses will always be an examination in the face of the public, with newspaper reporters present. The local reporters who have attended the meetings in the interests of their journals will be there, and may be called on to give evidence, and, if necessary, to contradict the police reporter. The worst allegation against them seems to be that the police report speeches at all, not that their reports are untrue. No doubt it is said that they do not transcribe their notes accurately, because their reports contain passages which are not to be found in the local newspapers; but I cannot admit that because a local journal will not give certain sentences, therefore the transcript of the police report is incorrect. The accuracy of their reports can only be ascertained in Court in evidence which is subject to cross-examination.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): This debate has become of much greater importance than it seemed likely to be at an earlier stage. When I spoke on this subject earlier in the evening, I confined myself chiefly to the question of the inconvenience which had resulted in the past from the necessity of having these reporters at our meetings—I pointed out the great expense which the employment of these persons entailed, and also the constant danger of breaches of the peace which attended their operations. I never said that these police officials performed their duties at the danger of their lives, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman clearly mistook me when he attributed that language to me. What are the facts? I should take it that there have been at least 1,000 meetings in Ireland of recent years, and at not one of these is there any record of a police reporter having been injured. What I pointed out was that in every case where my influence was sufficient to secure them a place upon the platform I used it on their behalf. Wherever I could I got them into a position of security; but I said that when that was not possible and they got among the crowd they were surrounded by police, and I said that that endangered the public peace, and that it was a most objectionable proceeding, not because it was particularly dangerous to the reporters themselves, but because it rendered possible a breach of the public peace, which otherwise would have remained undisturbed. A fresh spurt has been given to this discussion with regard to the use to be made of these speeches. The right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland says that if police reporters were not sent to our meetings violent speeches would be delivered with impunity. Well, I challenge the Front Bench opposite to point to a single instance in which a man has been convicted through a report furnished by one of these police reporters. The Government have wasted public money, and have carried on this insulting system, all to no purpose. As to speeches of a violent character being made in the absence of police reporters with impunity, that is just the case now when they attend our meetings. As I have said, for seven years speeches have been made in the presence of police reporters with impunity, and there is not a single instance in which a man has been convicted solely upon a speech made at a public meeting. Why do not the Government send round their police spies to public meetings in England? They do not do so, because they know that these men would be kicked out of the meeting; the public would not stand it. A Member of this House is to be placed on his trial on the 9th of next month, and against him you will have no evidence but the sworn testimony of a police spy. You are going to try a Member of this House for words spoken to his constituents, and, from the nature of the case, you are going to have no evidence against him except the evidence of one of these police spies. The right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite said that to try a man for spoken words is a dangerous game to enter upon. It is a game almost unknown in this country. When you come to try a man for spoken words, and when the only testimony you are going to put before the Court is that of a single, unsupported police spy, I hold the proceeding to be in the highest degree dangerous. What has occurred in the past? Why, you have been unable to get convictions. I have pointed out—I have always pointed out—that you could not get a decent jury to convict a man upon such testimony. I have always said that you are squandering the public money by piling up these records of speeches in Dublin Castle, because they are unsupported and useless. What is the result of the system you carry on? Why, it is that policemen unquestionably perjure themselves. There is great reluctance on the part of jurymen to convict people on the unsupported testimony of police reporters; but what are you going to do under this new Crimes Act? A man is to be brought up, not before a jury, but before a bench of magistrates holding their offices under the Crown, and he is to be put upon his trial under the 5th sub-section of the 2nd clause of the Act, charged with no offence except certain words spoken. And what evidence are you going to put before these magistrates—the tools and servants of the Government? Why, the only evidence will be that of the police spy, and nobody else. A Member of this House, for having spoken at a meeting of his own constituents, is to be placed upon his trial like the meanest pickpocket, and is threatened with the same consequences as usually attend the course of action of the common thief. This is an intolerable system, if that be the intention of the Government. If it be their intention in the future to use these police spies, as I shall continue to call them—detectives the Government might prefer to have them named—all I can say is, you would not dare to do such a thing in England or Scotland, for it would not be tolerated for an hour. Whilst sitting in Court I myself heard Sergeant Christopherson perjure himself. I heard him admit that he had previously sworn what he knew to be untrue. I heard him swear, in the first place, that he had not consulted a newspaper in preparing his report of certain speeches, but that he had relied solely upon his own note. He swore he did not take a particular passsge out of a newspaper, and then, in subsequent cross-examination by my hon. Friends, who fortunately understood shorthand, he admitted that he could not read a part of his shorthand note. He was asked whether he had written a passage which he could not read in his note from memory, and after much beating about the bush he admitted that he had read the newspaper report and copied that particular passage from it. If that is not perjury, will the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland tell me what perjury is?

Mr. GIBSON: What the man was asked was a general question as to whether the note was his own note, and he said it was.

Mr. DILLON: I remember this—that not until he was convicted out of the newspaper did this Sergeant Christopherson admit that he had taken a passage in his note from the newspaper. He was one of the chief witnesses, and was praised up to the sky as being everything that a policeman ought to be by Mr. Jury-Packer O'Brien, who is now Solicitor General for Ireland. Of course, the jury did not believe what Christopherson said. They discounted his evidence, and valued it at exactly what is was worth. At that time I was on my trial for conspiracy. There was a very great deal of evidence, so that the statement of one witness was not a matter of great importance. The question for the jury was whether the thing was criminal conspiracy or not—my participation in the operations of my Colleagues, if that were conspiracy, was proved up to the hilt; and, as I say, there was a vast mass of evidence as to our movements, and so forth, so that the breaking down of an individual witness was a matter of minor importance. But what have we now to face? We have to face a trial the result of which may depend upon a single sentence in a speech. There will be no documentary evidence required in future; we shall have no longer to go before a jury, but before two magistrates; and we shall be asked—"Did you say so and so, or did you not?" Who will be called to prove the case? Why, the police spy. We shall be called upon to prove a negative, and how shall we be able to do that? If we bring up 20 men to swear that we did not utter the words attributed to us, the magistrates will believe the police and not us or our witnesses; therefore the whole thing will be turned into a perfect mockery. Of course, these fellows will swear to please their paymasters. I have not the slightest doubt that Christopherson did perjure himself—he admitted that he did. Will they send this man round again to take notes with the intention of bringing him before the Court again to be sworn? That is a very serious question. Now, just let me point out a couple of cases which happened within our own experience, and which show how easily this objectionable state of things I describe occurs. I need not repeat the case of the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington). That hon. Member was unquestionably punished for words which had been used by another man. The witness against the hon. Member in that case took his note in longhand, and of all the idiotic performances ever seen this performance of the Government longhand note-taker was about the most ridiculous. A speaker whom this person was reporting would have uttered about a quarter of a column of *The Times*, before two sentences had been jotted down in the note book, and the most natural thing in the world for this person to do was to ram two speeches into one. As a matter of fact, that was what was done in the case of the hon. Member for the Harbour Division. Take another case—namely, the prosecution of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). He was prosecuted for a speech he made at a meeting in the County of Wexford, and this was one of the things cited at his trial—he put this question to the people he was addressing—"What shall we do with these Irish landlords?" and someone in the crowd replied—"Send them out to the Zulus!" When the report of this speech appeared this observation—"Send them out to the Zulus," was given as having been uttered by my hon. Friend. The local reporters swore that it was uttered by a person in the crowd, but the policeman stuck to his longhand note through thick and thin; he insisted that the words were used by my hon. Friend. What may happen in the future under these circumstances? Cases may occur all over Ireland where a drunken man may call out "Shoot them," or use some equally violent and improper expression. What security shall we have that some policeman will not stick that expression into the speech of the speaker, particularly as these police spies are always on the look-out for some violent expression or other in order that he may have something to report, and may prove himself a valuable policeman? What protection shall we have against such a person? Two Members of this House and some other gentlemen are to be put upon their trial before a pair of hireling magistrates at Mitchelstown for words used at a public meeting. They are to be tried simply on the evidence of a police spy. I say the sentiment of this country will rise up against it. We ought to press the Government to give us a pledge that the reports of these creatures will not be treated as sufficient evidence before their magistrates in dealing with prisoners under the Crimes Act, and more especially under the 5th and 6th sub-sections of the 2nd clause. Under those sub-sections one single sentence may consign a man to six months' imprisonment with hard labour. Whatever the present experience of the Governors of Ireland may be, we know that in all these matters the magistrates take their directions from the Castle, and that if they are ordered to convict a man upon this evidence they will do so. If they are ordered not to convict a man they will not do so. I say if you succeed in this trial you will have a considerable number of hon. Members more to deal with, and it is a matter of great importance that we should have an understanding as to what use the Government are going to make of evidence of this kind. I do not believe that in England a pickpocket would be convicted on such evidence, and yet upon that evidence two Members of this House are to be put upon their trial. I say two Members, but probably before the winter is out it will be 30 or 40 Members; and I say that if the evidence of police spies is to be used for this purpose, when once the people of England understand the character of that evidence there will be a tremendous reaction against the course the Government are taking.

MR. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn): I desire to ask the right hon. and learned

Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland a question as to a reply he made to an observation from these Benches. As I understand it, the right hon. and learned Gentleman says that all a shorthand writer is called upon to do is to give his version of certain parts of a speech which he has listened to without swearing to his notes in full—that he is not obliged to prove certain passages as in a system of verbatim notes. That is a doctrine of the most extraordinary character ever delivered by a Minister of the Crown. I quite agree with what has fallen from the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) as to the importance of this question. You are going to try these persons for observations they have made in speeches delivered at public meetings, and I have always understood that no shorthand note could be admitted in evidence unless it was a verbatim note of what had been said. I should like to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland if he agrees with the extraordinary doctrine laid down by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland—namely, that it is to be left to the discretion of the shorthand writer to give a full report or a summary of what takes place? Will he say that a report which is considered most important can be handed in in other than a verbatim form, and that the shorthand writer who has taken that note and supplied that report can be a competent witness for the Crown? I am anxious to put that plainly to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, because it is startling to me to hear that such a thing is possible even in Ireland. It is altogether unknown in this country.

Mr. GIBSON: The hon. and learned Member for Elgin and Nairn must have misunderstood what was said. What I understood my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland to say was that the substance of the words must be proved. There is no rule or law, as the hon. and learned Gentleman must be aware, as to verbatim notes. The question is as to the weight of evidence and the admissibility of evidence. If a man has no note of observations he has heard he gives his evidence from memory, though I admit that the Court must be very careful in admitting such evidence, and in admitting summarized reports. It is not necessary that a man should be able to write shorthand in order to make a note of criminal utterances, or in order to take down the effect of a person's statement. I know a Judge on the Bench who is able to write down almost every word a witness says, though he only writes longhand. As a matter of fact, the question which arises is this—is a witness a capable witness or not? As to shorthand, no doubt a witness who is able to take a correct verbatim note is a most desirable witness to have; but the question is not as to the desirability of the evidence, but as to the substance of a report—as to whether a man who is giving evidence is really telling the truth as to what has been said in his hearing.

Mr. CHANCE: I think we have got a stage further, and the Committee and the country have now before them a clear indication of the manner in which prosecutions are to be conducted in Ireland. It now appears that reporters who are not competent to take verbatim reports are sent down with specific instructions to take the speeches of certain men for the purposes of a prosecution—are sent down with instructions from the Chief Secretary to take down the inflammatory portions of speeches accurately and verbatim, and, as to the rest of the speeches, to give the two Resident Magistrates their impressions of those speeches. That certainly appears to me to be a new method of obtaining a conviction—a peculiarly Unionistic method, and one which I hope the people of this country will recognize in all its nakedness. Anyone who will refer to the proceedings at Green Street, when hon. Members of this House were prosecuted for conspiracy, will remember how the witness in some cases declared that he had put words into the speeches from recollection; that words he had left out in his note he had put in from recollection; that in other places the speaker had gone too fast for him to follow; and that, as a matter of fact, the witness never seemed able to get along in writing shorthand for more than eight words without falling behind the speaker and having to begin in the middle of another sentence. Some passages the man admitted taking from *The Freeman's Journal*, and altogether his report was an incoherent jumble of meaningless and incomplete sentences with frequent blanks. That was a specimen of the evidence upon which Members of Parliament were to get six months' imprisonment with hard labour. Of course, if such evidence had to be given before a jury, there would be no fear of its leading to a conviction, because no 12 men could be brought together anywhere to agree to convict anyone upon such evidence; but for the future these cases will not have to go before juries, but before two Resident Magistrates, and the Committee can easily imagine what their attitude is likely to be. I leave this matter to the consideration of the Committee itself. I most firmly allege—and my statement can be corroborated by 50 witnesses if necessary—that Sergeant Christopherson, who is the witness whose shorthand report I have been describing, deliberately perjured himself. He produced a speech which he alleged to have been uttered by the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. W. O'Brien), but not one word of which had fallen from that hon. Member's lips. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland declared that the "spicy bits" had been left out of the local newspaper reports; but the fact of the case is that those so-called spicy passages not only did not appear in the local papers, but did not appear in the police reporter's notes. They only appeared in the transcript; so that it is clear that these passages were inserted in the solicitor's office in Dublin Castle. I have here the notes I myself took at the trial, and I have case after case where words were inserted, and, if necessary, I could occupy the next hour by giving additional instances. Unless I receive a most distinct pledge that in the future these shorthand writers will be prevented from vamping up their notes from the local newspapers before they send in their transcripts to the Central Authority, whatever that authority may be, I shall be obliged to move that you, Sir, report Progress, and ask leave to sit again. Considering that there is not the slightest chance of the Government depriving themselves of the services of these infamous instruments, I now move that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Chance.*)

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 56; Noes 112: Majority 56.—(Div. List, No. 431.)

Question again proposed, "That Item E—Extra Pay—be reduced by £3,500."

MR. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): There is one observation which has been made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, in his defence of this system of police reporters, that I very cordially hope may be well reported to-morrow. He has defended, or he has justified the system on this ground—that police reporters, and police reporters alone, were possible, because other reporters are not available for the Government. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had made that observation, or had justified the action of the Government by such an argument, it would not be so significant. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland speaks purely on information derived from official sources, which may or may not be correct. The right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland occupies a different position. He knows the Irish system, and the Irish people, and the Irish Government well; and still what is his testimony? His testimony is this —that all the ordinary newspaper reporters, whether they be Orange, Whig, or Liberal Unionist, are unavailable for Government reporters. The system of Dublin Castle is so detested by all classes of the community alike, whether they be Orange, Liberal Unionist, or Whig, that a reporter cannot be found who will do their work for them. Therefore they are constrained, according to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's contention, from the lack of independent evidence which their system renders it impossible for them to obtain, to go to the Police Force for this information. When we have got a police report, like the report read out by my hon. Friend the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance), perhaps it may be suggested that there will be a difficulty in adjudicating upon that report. Not the slightest difficulty. For in these cases, the Crown, or the Government, occupy a three-fold position. They are first of all prosecutors, then they are witnesses, and then they are Judges; because it is absurd to contend, in the light of day, that the Resident Magisgrates who are to adjudicate upon these reports are themselves anything but the agents of the Executive Government. They will be satisfied on smaller evidence than would satisfy even a Castlehack jury. I am justified in again directing the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to this matter. An hon. Gentleman, a Member of this House, will be tried in a very short time before two Resident Magistrates. He will be tried on police reports—on reports given by persons who are not experts—who are not trained to report, but who are trained by officialism to convict, and whose object is to convict. The right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland said, and said with spare justice, that the law of evidence, both in England and Ireland, is the same. A great authority in England on evidence—Mr. Taylor on evidence—cites some very pertinent cases in reference to police evidence, and he says that they give evidence in reference to reports as to which they are mere amateurs, and he compares them to bloodhounds. And that is in fair England, where the policeman is the friend of the people and not the enemy. But before whom in Ireland are the reports of these police witnesses to be submitted? They are to submit their evidence to Resident Magistrates, who are themselves Government agents. I wish to call attention to these Resident Magistrates——

The CHAIRMAN: That will be entirely outside this Vote.

MR. MAC NEILL: I was not in the slightest degree speaking with reference to these magistrates. I was simply saying this—that the tribunal is such that the evidence which should be placed before it should be very carefully sifted; that it should be beyond suspicion and beyond taint; that this evidence is clearly tainted evidence; and that it is the only evidence on which the Crown can go, who are themselves the prosecutors, the witnesses, and the Judges.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Mr. Mac Neill

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I think, Mr. Courtney, it may be convenient now to call attention to a number of questions connected with this Vote, some of which were raised at an earlier hour this evening. I stated my views on a former occasion, and I shall content myself on the present occasion with briefly recapitulating my observations. The Police Force in Ireland is considerably employed in giving special protection; and I claim both in respect to the policy of coercion, and also in order that we may apply our critical faculties to the present Vote, that we ought to have fuller particulars of the names and residences of the persons in Ireland who are wholly Boycotted than we have now before us. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) has informed us that persons described as wholly Boycotted are persons with whom their neighbours refuse to hold any intercourse, and that persons under complete police protection are persons always specially protected by the police in their houses and when they go abroad.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I did not say "always."

MR. SEXTON: I will state my reason why I think I am right. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman divided these persons into two classes. The second class are those under police protection, and their houses are visited at different times; but with regard to the first class receiving more sufficient protection, I think his words were these—that they are "always" under police protection.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I most distinctly did not say they were "always" under police protection. I said they were under police protection, and frequently in their own houses; but I said their houses were in such a position that it was impossible for the police to be always there.

MR. SEXTON: What are we to understand from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman? Are the bulk of these people "always" under police protection, and some few of them "nearly always?" Is that it? I cannot understand the right hon. and gallant Gentleman otherwise.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: What I said was that the persons who were wholly under police protection were those whose lives were in evident danger, and as to whom the police were constantly on the watch. I forget the exact words I used; but I said, I believe, the police were generally quartered in their houses. But there are persons who are under police protection in whose houses the police are not quartered.

Mr. SEXTON: Then the persons who are less closely protected are persons whose houses are surrounded at different times in the 24 hours? The first class is more completely protected, and the protection usually takes the form of a police guard accompanying these persons when they go abroad. What I submit is, that the fact of the protection of these men in Ireland by the police is so public and so notorious that there is no conceivable reason why their names and residences should be withheld from this House. That is my statement; and I claim for the Representatives of the people that we have the same right now as we had to the information which Mr. Forster gave in 1881, and that we have a right to discover whether these are bogus cases, and to discover for ourselves in how many cases there is real danger, and in how many cases the police protection springs from vanity. Secondly, I ask what is the meaning of the statement in the newspapers this morning, that the County Inspector of Limerick intimates that no more police will be supplied at evictions carried out for the non-payment of rent? Have the Government returned to the policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) last winter? Do they still stand on the inviolability of the law, or do they intend to exercise a dispensing power? Do they bring conscience into play as that right hon. Gentleman did last winter, and do they consider in every case whether the merits of the case between landlord and tenant are such as to justify interference or not? Then, Sir, with regard to the resignations of constables because of the passage of the Crimes Act. I wish to know how many constables have resigned in consequence of the passage of the Crimes Act; and whether it is true that the Government have refused to constables who upon a case of conscience resigned their places in he force the certificate of character which is given to constables receiving ordinary discharge? Then with regard to *The Times*' libels in "Parnellism and Crime," I pointed out already that the Government have fled from their position, both by their refusal of a Select Committee, and also by their Proclamation of the National League. I pointed out that pictures and verses of the most insulting character to the people of Ireland are hung up in every headquarter station of the Constabulary in Ireland. I want to know if they are to be taken down, or whether the Government will allow these places to be made centres for the dissemination of such malignant and insulting effusions? My hon. Friends have read letters from the police, in which they point out that they cannot dare to have a popular newspaper in their hands; and my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenny) has read a letter from a constable, in which he states that simply because *United Ireland* was found with him he was discharged from the force, but that the Inspector General, taking a merciful view of the case, allowed him to remain on the promise that he would not do it again. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, who is a great example of political impartiality, will, perhaps, tell us whether men are to be sent out of the force for reading *United Ireland*, and whether, on the other hand, any filth or calumny that vindictiveness can dictate will be allowed to be sown broadcast with the sanction of the Government? In regard to the Constabulary pensioners, their case is a perfectly good one. The Royal Commission of 1872 reported that there should be an increase of pay from that time, and it was given. The increase of pension depended on the increase of pay; yet a number of men who received an increase of pay in December, 1872, and who retired from the force in August, 1874, have to be contented with the old pension, although men retiring after August, 1874, have got the higher pension. These men are not numerous, but they have a good case. They have a real grievance, and they are entitled to have it remedied. Then, with regard to the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, are you going to allow the Inspector General to administer this fund on his own responsibility hereafter? You have one class of constable that is not subscribers to this fund, and you have another class which is compelled to subscribe. The officers are quartered upon this fund of the men. The officers wound up their own fund, having taken every penny of it. Is that system to go on any longer? I think if you quarter the officers on the constables of the force, you will not promote discipline in the ranks of the Constabulary. First, we ask for an account. We want the chief sources of revenue from the year 1866—to whom the payments were made, and why they were made? If the fund has been honestly administered, why do you deny us this information. These poor constables and pensioners have paid almost every penny of this fund, and they have a right to know what is done with it. You have no right to deny this information, unless you wish to lay your officials open to the suspicion of knavery. We think this fund has been used for the emolument of constables and officers who, we consider, have acted in a way which is improper in connection with the administration of justice. After the access which we have obtained to the ear and the mind of Great Britain, if you think you can keep this fund of £130,000 in the hands of an official in Dublin to use corruptly you are greatly mistaken. If the men desire to wind up this fund, they have a right to have it wound up. These men say—"Wind up the fund and divide the money between us." It will do them some good in that way; it will not, as you have it. In the last place, Mr. Courtney, about the Portrush riot, will the Government grant an inquiry into the matter? Insinuations are thrown out that these Foresters are turbulent men. The fact is, that these men have on their annual excursions been constantly assailed. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland is a Forester. He is an Orangeman too; so he can hold justice evenly in this case. These men gave notice to the police, and the police took no notice of this warning. These men were assailed by the Orangemen in the most violent manner. Their assailants have not been arrested. The men who were assailed have been arrested. One of the witnesses has been arrested for perjury; and I ask that a public inquiry should be granted, which will reveal who were the assailants in this case—the members of the public society, or the members of the secret society, to both of which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman belongs. But by far the most important question of all is that concerned with social order in Belfast. My third question concerns social order in Belfast, and I have to say that unless the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland gives us reasonable hope that the administrative measures recommended by the Commissioners will be carried out this Session we shall raise this subject again. This is a matter which concerns the rights of Irishmen and the rights of my constituents. The right hon. Gentleman has had seven months in which to digest the Reports of the Commissioners and incubate his policy with reference to the police; and I ask him, in the first place, whether he will bring in the Bill, and, in the second place, whether the Police Force will be administered in accordance with the Report of the Royal Commission?

Mr. EWART (Belfast, N.): The hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) has complained that the Belfast Municipal Bill has not come forward. I think that complaint proceeds with a very bad grace from hon. Gentlemen opposite, because we all know that obstructive tactics have been used with regard to the Bill. The hon. Member for West Belfast also complains of the oppression of the minority in Belfast by the majority. This complaint of the hon. Member reminds me of the fable of the "Wolf and the Lamb." The minority in Belfast seem to think that they may treat the majority there in the way in which the majority in the West of Ireland treat the minority, and they have found that it will not do. I say that from the unfortunate time when in the case of one of the docks the minority threatened that there should be no employment given to the majority the coercion has been on the part of the minority. [Mr. Sexton: No!] The evidence given before the Commission and the Report itself sustains that view, notwithstanding what may be thought by the hon. Gentleman opposite. The Bill referred to by the hon. Gentleman passed through the second reading in the small hours of the morning, at a time when the House was in a temper which forbade deliberate discussion.

THE CHAIRMAN: I regret to interfere with the hon. Gentleman in replying to the statement made by the hon. Member for West Belfast, but I must point out that it is quite irregular to discuss the Bill upon the present Vote.

MR. EWART: I bow at once to your decision, Mr. Chairman, although I believe the hon. Member for West Belfast opened the question very largely in the speeches he has made this evening.

MR. SEXTON: I never did anything of the kind.

MR. EWART: In obedience to your ruling, Sir, I will reserve my observations to another opportunity.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I will endeavour to go through the various points raised by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) earlier in the evening, and which he has recapitulated in his last speech. The first point taken by the hon. Member was the duty on the part of the Government of giving the names of those persons who were undergoing police protection in various parts of Ireland. I confess that I do not feel myself able to give the hon. Member the promise which he asks for, nor do I perfectly understand the motive which induces him to ask for it. The principal ground on which I object to accede to the request is, that I do not think it would be fair to those persons who have already to undergo both the annoyance of police protection and the danger which makes it necessary, that the peculiarities of their cases should be canvassed in this House and made the subject of public debate. The hon. Member has rather hinted to the Committee that many of these cases were due to the obstinacy and folly of the persons under protection, and he has implied that they have brought their misfortune upon themselves. If that were the case with every one of them, I think it would be rather hard that we should give their names and allow all the supposed facts of their cases to be brought before the House in debate and criticized with the view to show, first, that they ought not to have received police protection; and, secondly, that if they have required it, it was entirely due to their own fault. The hon. Gentleman went on to discuss what he described as *The Times* calumny. [Mr. SEXTON: Libels!] I think the hon. Gentleman used stronger language; and he told us that the Government had fled from the position they had originally taken up in that matter. I have never altered my position in this respect, and I have never felt that I had any reason why I should withdraw from what I have stated in this House and in public. The hon. Gentleman asks whether we will prevent these publications being circulated in the police barracks. For my own part, I confess that I do not see my way to start what would be an entirely new thing with regard to the police force—namely, an *index expurgatorius.*

MR. SEXTON: Will you let them have *United Ireland*?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should as much regret to lay down any regulations with regard to *United Ireland* as I should to lay down any regulations to prevent the police reading any pamphlet which they may desire to read, and I must entirely decline to do what the hon. Gentleman asks for. The hon. Member then proceeded to discuss the position of the men who left the police force in 1882 and in 1884, and who consequently did not get the increase of pension which they would have got had they left after that date. It is not perfectly accurate to say that those members of the force are suffering from injustice, because they were engaged to enter the force on certain terms, and those terms have been rigidly adhered to. At the same time, I am ready to grant that they may have a sense of hardship when they compare their lot with that of their more fortunate brethren who did not leave until after 1884. I have had my attention already called to this matter, and I will again look into it and see if anything can be done. The hon. Gentleman then went on to discuss the police fund, and here, I think, he made several assertions which, had he been aware of the facts, he would, at all events, have refrained from laying before the Committee. In the hon. Member's opinion, there was an accumulation fund, which, in 1866, was used in an improper manner. But, as a matter of fact, there was no accumulation; the money was spent each year, as I am informed. I understand that the whole police fund was administered under Statute and audited by the public auditors under the supervision of the Treasury.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Where can we find the report of the auditor?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The accounts were audited by a public auditor. I am not able to say that the audit was a public audit, but I will inquire into the matter, and if the hon. Gentleman will place a Question on the Paper, I will give a specific answer to it. In the meantime I repeat that the accounts were taken by a public auditor, and therefore there is no ground for suspicion or belief that there has been any improper use of the fund, or that it has been spent as Secret Service money. The hon. Gentleman asks that there should be power to divide the accumulation among the pensioners; but it is sufficient to say that many of these pensioners have not contributed to the fund at all, and, consequently, it would not be fair to give them a share of it.

Mr. SEXTON: They all contributed to it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe I am right in what I stated.

Mr. SEXTON: We say that the officers got three times as much as their pay, and the men only half as much.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will now leave that question, and proceed to the point of the hon. Gentleman relating to the riots which occurred in connection with the excursion of the Foresters—first of all saying that the hon. Gentleman will excuse me for stating that I doubt the accuracy of his remark about the police fund, although, as I have said, I will look into the matter. Now, with regard to the riots. The hon. Member proceeded to say that his clients, as I believed he called them, have been libelled by the Government, and that the Orangemen were responsible for the riot. I never concealed from the House that the first aggressors were those roughs of whom the hon. Gentleman spoke; but while I admitted that I was also bound to say that the provocation was no adequate justification of the reprisals subsequently made by the members of the Foresters Society who fired several shots, they being the only persons who fired shots at all. At Ballymoney the excursionists fired several shots apparently without provocation, and wounded a man who was only preserved from death by an accident. But Ballymoney is not the only place at which the excursionists fired. After leaving Ballymoney they fired other shots, and no reason is given except that the drink was beginning to tell; at the distance of a mile and a-half from this the trains were attacked, stones were thrown, and the excursionists replied by firing pistol shots. At Ballymena about 30 shots were fired; there were many people about, and three persons were wounded; for this there was no excuse, as the train was high above the people; an attempt was afterwards made to upset the train; that was, of course, unjustifiable; but the shots were fired on people entirely defenceless, and without any provocation. These are the facts, and I do not think they demand the inquiry which the hon. Gentlemen asks for.

Mr. SEXTON: Is not the attack on the excursionists a fair matter for inquiry?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No. I do not think it is, because I do not admit that it was a riotous attack. It was more a row than a riot. The excursionists were extremely scattered, and it was impossible for the police to prevent the disorder, although, as I understand, they made every exertion to do so. The next point of the hon. Gentleman related to the resignation of police officers in different parts of Ireland. I cannot say at the moment what was stated on their resignation with regard to certificates, but that is a matter which I will inquire into. The whole number of the men who resigned in Ireland was only 16 or 17, and they appear to have represented no part of the general opinion of the force; there has been no strain of the kind which the hon. Gentleman deplores, and I understand that there are 2,000 candidates anxious to enter the force and replace the 16 men who resigned.

Mr. SEXTON: I hope the Government will not refuse certificates of the good conduct to the men who left the force because they could not conscientiously discharge the duty imposed upon them.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I should imagine that that would not be a ground for refusing certificates. At the same time, I can imagine that a constable might resign in a way and under circumstances which would practically amount to insubordination, and if that was so in the case of any police constable he would not deserve that certificate of good character which the hon. Gentleman desires should be given to every member of the Force who resigned. The hon. Gentleman then asks what line the Government mean to take up with regard to the Belfast Bill? I do not know that I have anything to add to the answers I have given in this House to the hon. Gentleman from time to time. The Bill is one which, with others relating to Ireland, the Government intend to bring forward. I confess that at this period of the Session it is impossible to think of passing any Bill which is likely to excite any prolonged controversy, and I would ask the hon. Gentleman to consult with his Colleague the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), who practically assumed that the Bill was dead because he intended to oppose it. Of course, the point of this particular question is the amount of the time which would be consumed on the Bill; and, after all, the hon. Gentleman must not suppose that opposition to the Bill would be entirely confined to Gentlemen opposite. The hon. Member said he should offer the Bill his most strenuous opposition if one clause was withdrawn.

MR. SEXTON: I said I should offer it most strenuous opposition if the clause was in the Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Then I think an hon. Member who announces his decision to give the Bill serious opposition cannot well complain that the Bill is not on the Order Paper together with Business which it is absolutely necessary to get through. I regret that we cannot pass this Bill; but I would remind the hon. Gentleman of a fact already under his notice that, in my judgment, although it is not possible to say that riots will not occur again, we may look forward to the absence of serious riots now with greater confidence than we could two months ago, because the Crimes Act has armed us with greater power than we before possessed for dealing with riots.

MR. SEXTON: Power to deal with them when they have broken out, but not to prevent them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman, I think, will hardly underrate the operation of the Crimes Act, because, unless I am deceived, it was proposed by hon. Gentlemen opposite that the Bill should be made to extend to the whole of Ireland by Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant, and they have recognized that the Bill might be of great use in checking riots in the North of Ireland. I would remind the hon. Gentleman that we have already passed the two anniversaries at which riots are most likely to occur in Belfast, and that we have passed them without any very serious disturbances arising. I contend that there is no serious danger of riots occurring at Belfast, and therefore I think the necessity for the Bill referred to is not so immediate and pressing as might be supposed. I do not believe that the Roman Catholic population whom the hon. Member is very properly desirous of protecting, or the rights of property at Belfast, are in the slightest danger in the future, and therefore I hope the hon. Gentleman will not think it necessary to prolong the discussion on this subject.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I do not think the reasons of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland for not pushing on the Belfast Bill are sufficient. Why does the Government not use the closure against hon. Members who are opposed to the Belfast Municipal Regulation Bill? The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) was very ready to use the closure in the case of the Crimes Bill. Why, then, does he not bring forward this Bill and apply the closure to hon. Members representing East, North, and South Belfast, who are the only Members in opposition to the Bill? The reason given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for not proceeding with the Bill is futile; but I think we know the real reason perfectly well. We can easily imagine that the right hon. Gentleman is in the hands of the old Orange ring of Belfast, and the members of the Corporation of that town do not want to be deprived of their power by the Bill. A clause has been specially inserted to draw the teeth of these magistrates in Belfast who are responsible for all the riots which have taken place; the powers of those magistrates are to be curtailed. But the Government refuse to put in operation the very instrument they have at their disposal for hurrying on Business; and in the meantime these prejudiced magistrates remain on the Bench provoking riots and making the town a bye-word. The right hon. Gentleman says that the Belfast crowd would know that the Crimes Act was in existence, and therefore further riots were not to be expected; but if the Belfast crowd were assured in addition that the Government would use the Crimes Act against them we should be much more assured that this anticipated good result would happen. But the people of Belfast believe that the Crimes Act will be used against the Nationalists only. No sufficient reason has been given by the right hon. Gentleman for not passing the Bill. Any excuse seems sufficient to the right hon. Gentleman, in his flippant and insolent manner in this House——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must withdraw that expression.

Mr. CLANCY: Well, Sir, I withdraw. The reasons given for not stating the names of the persons Boycotted are very amusing. The idea of concealing from persons Boycotting the names of the persons Boycotted! Boycotting means that a large proportion of the population have united in avoiding certain people, and under these circumstances you refuse to give the names of the persons Boycotted, for the reason that the persons Boycotting them would know them! It is ridiculous and absurd. The only reason I can give for the refusal of the right hon. Gentleman is that these statistics are a mass of fraud, and that they are filled up with cases which never occurred. We are entitled to think this from what has resulted from the examination of similar statistics in the past. When the late Mr. Forster produced a list of outrages in 1881 hon. Gentlemen in this house had an opportunity of examining them, and in scores of cases they were found to be of a most frivolous character, while many were found never to have occurred at all except in the minds of policemen and clerks in Dublin, who were paid £20 each for the work of preparing the statistics. I have looked at the Return for the Division of the County of Dublin which I represent, and I find a blank in connection with it, although there are there a number of National League branches. I want to know why the Government do not fill up these blanks? They could easily have done that, and nobody would have been able to find them out, because they refuse to give all information. I will give the Committee some information with regard to these cases of Boycotting. At a Petty Sessions, about a week ago, a man came before the magistrates and complained that he was Boycotted and intimidated by his brother farmers; he swore that he was driving home cattle and that he was called a dairyman and an emergency man; the charge of being a dairyman seems to be the one which he felt most. Now, this man was actually the provoker of all the disturbances in the neighbourhood, and he had summoned people in the neighbourhood before the magistrates on charges which on examination proved to be without any foundation. We believe that these cases of Boycotting are like that of the midwife whom the right hon. Gentleman has carefully avoided since he became Chief Secretary, and to whom he has never offered any apology for having grossly libelled her; nor has the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer made any apology to the people of Wexford, who were charged with depriving a child of milk, which charge was also disproved. I believe the Government know that these cases are more or less bogus cases, and that is the reason why they refuse the information asked for——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is again imputing to hon. Members of this House that they are saying what they know to be false. I must call on the hon. Member to withdraw.

Mr. CLANCY: If I have said anything implying a want of truthfulness on the part of Members of this House upon the Treasury Bench, I do withdraw the remark; but a very strong suspicion is raised in our minds by the fact that investigation has shown that a number of cases of alleged Boycotting were bogus cases. After what has occurred, and after the Government have refused the information we ask for, we cannot avoid the strong suspicion that the cases they now put forward would also turn out to be bogus cases.

Major RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I have lived some years in Ireland and have had experience of the Irish Constabulary. I thoroughly agree with the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton), who has stated that the Irish Constabulary are not a crime-detecting force. We know that in point of physique they are the finest body in existence; but we also know that there is about them too much of the soldier and too little of the policeman. I have always thought that if they were more of a civil and less of a military force they would get through more work and cost the country less money.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N,): I admit that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has endeavoured to meet our points; and I do trust that when he goes away for his holidays he will not forget to look into the matters brought under his notice. The right hon. Gentleman says, with regard to the police fund, that there has been no accumulation, and that there has been every year a Government audit. But it is a curious evidence of the distrust of the Government in Ireland that the police force themselves are alleging that the English Government is the most corrupt Government on earth, because they have been handing over immense sums of money to men like French, and others of the higher members of the force. These charges show the utter want of confidence in the Government; and I think that when you have these charges made the time has come for inquiry. If the Constabulary make charges of this kind, why do you not publish this audit; why do you allow these suspicions to go abroad, which blacken the British name in Ireland? You allege that these audits exist. If you say that they shall be published, I have no objection to withdraw from any further observations on the subject, and I shall be glad to hear from the right hon. Gentleman a statement that he will carry out our views. The present police system in Ireland puts into the hands of English gentlemen enormous powers which they do not know how to exercise. These gentlemen come to Ireland and spend a great deal of their time in shooting, fishing, and playing at lawn tennis with the girls. Why, all the pockets in Dublin may be picked and the whole of the city robbed so far as these gentlemen are concerned. They are very nice gentlemen for the purposes I have described; they want to be military men without police duties, because thieving and trespass are too much for their high notions. I assure the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman at his side (Colonel King-Harman) can give him every information on this point. I will refer to the notorious case of Mrs. Lucas. Her husband is a magistrate, and the family has been under police protection for three years; there have been three burnings in the house, and they have made three several applications to the Grand Jury for compensation. It was not enough for these people to have ordinary patrols; they had the police actually in the house. Mrs. Lucas was convicted of having poured petroleum on the curtains, setting fire to them, and then claiming compensation. I think that by giving compensation you put a premium on acts of this kind. Take the case of a farmer when the season is wet; it is much better for him to get compensation at the rate of £5 a-ton for his hay than to sell it in the market for 30*s.* a-ton. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) once went up to Dublin Castle and said that he should be shot if a certain man named M'Ewan was not arrested, and the man was sent to prison for six months because he had a knife in his pocket.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I beg the hon. Member's pardon. The man's name was Weldon.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The man's name does not matter. But the fact remains that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman went up to the Castle and said that someone was going to shoot him.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: The man was not put in gaol. I have never asked for police protection, and never will.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Whether the man was put in gaol or not will easily appear from the list of suspects. Of course, if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman denies this I withdraw that portion of my case; but the story has been told in *The World*, and I presume it was on the authority of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. At all events, I have shown that there is a distinct premium on this system of police protection; and I think that, as Representatives of the tenant class and of poor men, we should have some opportunity of testing what amount of real substance there is in these allegations. We do not want these men to appear as persecuted persons when they are selling their eggs at 1*s.* 6*d.* a-dozen to the police. If you cannot particularize the names of individuals, you should give us some small area of the country, so that we may have some means afforded us of testing these allegations. This is a fair demand on the Government, seeing that a Member of the Government—the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland—has been the first to throw discredit on the statistics of the police, and that the Government are now laying themselves open to the charge, whether true or false, of manipulating these returns. The statistics of crime in Ireland suggest the idea of a concertina, which can be drawn out and shut up at pleasure. If it is wanted to prove that the Crimes Act is a success, it will be pushed in; and if the opposite course is thought desirable, it will be drawn out. I think we are entitled to what we ask for; and, considering that the liberties of the Irish people are being taken away upon the authority of the merest cyphers, I trust that when other statistics are laid upon the Table of the House, some opportunity will be afforded of enabling our local knowledge to be applied for the purpose of checking them.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I think the answer of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has been unsatisfactory in the extreme; but, after what has been said by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) and the hon. and learned Member for North Longford, who has just sat down, I do not propose to occupy the Committee at length. I will, however, give an example of the way in which this system of police protection works. There exists in a town on the borders of my constituency a large trader, who has property and farms in that constituency. This gentleman has had disputes for years with the farmers round about him; it became his interest to be Boycotted, and, as a matter of fact, since he was put under police protection the man has been making his fortune. He is supplying the police force for miles round him with things which the police could get cheaper in the neighbouring towns; he is sending carts for 20 or 30 miles over the country round him, and he is making a splendid profit; he has now practically the monopoly of one kind of business, and I have no doubt he blesses his stars that police protection was granted to him. We have been discussing this evening the Special Vote, and have gone into the question as to how far this expenditure is for the good of Ireland or for the benefit of the British taxpayer. I wish to call attention to the fact that on many occasions the Constabulary go beyond the law in Ireland, and that practically we have no redress. I will give an instance for the purpose of illustrating my meaning. I was asked to attend a social meeting to be held in the town of Kanturk. As I passed through the town the local band met me and accompanied me to the priest's house, and when they arrived at the gate leading to the private grounds of the priest the band entered; the police were about to follow, and the priest spoke to the Head Constable forbidding him to enter his grounds; the constable insisted on the right of entry. I stated that there was no intention of holding a meeting, and that I should certainly support Father Collings in this matter; the crowd gradually became more excited because the police were inclined to force their way through the gate over the body of Father Collings; the Police Inspector went away and returned with four armed men. This was a clear case of the violation of the law. There was no intention of holding a meeting; my visit was purely of a social character to the priest in question, and yet this party of police assumed that they could violate the law and enter the grounds of this gentleman without any warrant or authority whatever. It is of such things as that we complain. I asked the Inspector if he had a warrant, he said no; I asked him for his authority, he said that he acted on his own authority, and he added that he would use force; I said—"I will show you a way by which you can go round and observe everything that goes on, and if a public meeting takes place you can then exercise your right to enter." But when a policeman gets his back up in Ireland all thoughts of legality vanish; he knows no law but the ideas of the moment. These men actually forced their way across a ditch, and if I had not used my best exertions there would have been a collision between the people and the police, who committed the trespass. I contend that there was no right of entry; there was no meeting, and even if there had been there was no right of entry without warrant. All that the police were asked was not to commit a trespass. The notetaker drew a revolver; but the priest placed himself beside the policeman, and no harm was done. I addressed a Question on this subject to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and, to my indignation, I got the answer that the constables were perfectly right; that they had information that a meeting was to be held, and that the crowd were armed with pitchforks. The whole story was absolutely unfounded. We complain that on occasions of this kind the police, in their endeavour to gain promotion by their officiousness, are constantly breaking the law and endangering order. Instead of guarding the peace, their action has directly a contrary effect. I asked the right hon. Gentleman if he would grant a local inquiry, and he refused to do so; but he will receive the *ex parte* statement of the District Inspector, who will, no doubt, exonerate the police, no matter what they were guilty of. We are asked to vote £1,000,000 of money for the purposes of this force, and we, in return, ask that some restraint shall be put upon the action of the police. If, on the occasion I refer to, the Member for the District had not been present it would have been impossible to prevent a collision between the people and the police, because the crowd was composed mostly of young men who would easily have swept the police down the road. I could give half-a-dozen cases in which I have witnessed the exasperating and overbearing conduct of the police, and in which they have distinctly broken the law. It was only last winter that I was returning from a walk in the City of Cork and saw a large number of people coming from their evening devotions; a charge was made by the police at a short distance, and I saw the people who were coming from church beaten and belaboured in the most unmerciful manner by a number of constables who had been attacking the people at the distance of a few streets from the spot. What wonder is it that the police are not respected in places where these things are done? If the Government gave it to be clearly understood that the constables in the discharge of their duty in isolated districts must remain within the lines of the law, I prophecy that there would be a state of things very different from that which now exists in Ireland. We know that the Constabulary are not supposed to do more at evictions than simply protect the Sheriffs and bailiffs in charge, but I say that they show an anxiety to pass beyond the legitimate lines of their duty, which we might expect that any Government having at heart the best interests of the country and a sense of responsibility would seek to repress. We contend that the police in Ireland conceive it to be their duty to range themselves deliberately on one particular side—on the side of the so-called oppressed minority in Ireland, and it is under that view that the most harsh and illegal acts are committed by the Constabulary in Ireland; nor does this occur alone in cases which are known at the Castle, for there are hundreds of cases in which the people themselves are only too glad to allow what occurs to blow over. I think we should only be doing our duty to our constituents if we were to discuss these matters at very considerable length; and I regret that on the present occasion there is not a large attendance of hon. Members above the Gangway. [*Ironical cheers.*] I have stated nothing which is not within my own knowledge, and there is nothing that I have stated with regard to the action of the police for which I cannot give authority, and therefore the ironical cheers of hon. Members opposite have no bearing on the cases I have stated. I wish there were more hon. Members present, because I could lay before the Committee such instances of oppression on the part of the police as, I believe, have never occurred in a civilized country. But if we cannot get a large audience in the Committee to whom we can expose these things, we have a large audience outside to whom we can explain these acts of contemptible tyranny.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland by what he has said to-night has exhibited to the Committee a very good specimen of the class of men who administer government in Ireland. Of all the absurdities of which the right hon. Gentleman has been guilty, the greatest is that of refusing to state the names of persons in Ireland who are Boycotted. We are told that, as one of the first essentials of Boycotting, men are denounced by resolution and by name, and yet we are told that you decline to give names because individuals may suffer in consequence. You must know perfectly well that whatever you may take away from the sufferings of these people, you cannot add to them by giving their names. We know that in many instances public sympathy has reached these people when their case has become known in England and elsewhere, and it is only by giving their names that it can be known. But to refuse their names and yet to say that these people are under police protection is absurd. The right hon. Gentleman asks why we want to know the names. We want to know them in order to be able to inquire into these matters. The late Mr. Forster treated us a great deal more honestly than the present Government, because he brought forward the names of the persons and the places in which the cases occurred. Mr. Forster laid a Blue Book upon the Table of the House which we were able to examine, and, from the particulars it contained, were able to prove that a great number of the cases were of a bogus character. What security have the Committee that a great number of these cases are not bogus, absurd, or altogether wrong? We know that shortly after General Buller reached the County of Kerry, he deprived a great number of the people of the police protection they were receiving; he found out that this police protection was given without adequate inquiry, and frequently without any inquiry at all, and in consequence he withdrew it from a great number of people in the district. I ask hon. Members if that is not a proof that in other parts of Ireland numbers of bogus cases may occur. Many of these cases are unquestionably of that character, and it seems to me that you encourage the people to act in this way, because you grant police protection to them without the slightest inquiry. Some time ago a Resident Magistrate went to the County of Mayo; he arrived in the district, and in three months he increased the turmoil; he wrote a letter to the newspapers describing the state of things which was so preposterous that he was got rid of. This gentleman who was a divisional magistrate, had seven or eight policemen about his place; they patrolled his plantations, they stopped every one who went up the avenues; even beggar women were stopped and questioned; when he went out he had constables with him on the car, and when he came to a hedge the constables jumped down and beat the woods before he arrived. This system went on for months. I know another magistrate who resided in the same district, and who although he did his duty well, and was promoted by Lord Spencer, yet walked about his district unattended and, I venture to say, never had a car during the whole time he was in the county. That proves that you furnished without inquiry a bodyguard to a man who did not require it at an expense of £1,000 a-year, and instead of its doing any good his district became a focus of disorder. Here is one sample of the stupidity of the Government in encouraging men in this unnecessary and idiotic course without inquiry; and the case of the magistrate who fearlessly did his duty, and walked about the country free from all idea of danger, proves, I say, beyond contradiction that there must have been something wrong in the conduct of the other magistrate who was afraid of and insulted everybody about him. Mr. Clifford Lloyd cost this country £5,000 a-year; he kept 20 policemen on duty; he never went on his excursions unless he was surrounded by a bodyguard like an Eastern Pasha; he left a train of disorder behind him; you sent him to Egypt, and having made that country too hot for him you had to kick him out of Egypt. Then you sent him to the Mauritius and had to kick him out from there; and now you have him on your hands like a White Elephant, and do not know what to do with him. Then there was the case of the man who got police protection in Galway, and used to walk about, attended by policemen on a car which he hired at 10*s.* or 15*s.* a-day. What security have we in cases analogous to this? Not the slightest. In these cases of police protection I am convinced that if you gave us the names and particulars—and there is no shadow of excuse for not doing so—we should be able to prove that the large majority of these cases are either bogus and unnecessary, or due to the outrageous conduct of the individuals themselves, conduct that you encourage in Ireland by affording this protection. In the case of Miss Ellard the police took up their quarters in the house, and in a short time Miss Ellard got married to one of the constables. I do not know whether it is the duty of the Executive to find ladies with police officers to ride about with them in carriages, but in this case she married one of the constables, and he took the name of Ellard. Then there is the case of Lord Kenmare. Last year you spent £1,200 in protecting his house near Killarney, and is not that a monstrous state of things? Here is a man who ruins himself by foolish extravagance, who keeps the whole district of Kerry like a boiling pot in consequence of his evictions, who has reduced himself to the condition of a pauperized absentee, who leaves his whole estate and his people without any supervision at all, who locks up his empty house and does not visit the place at all, and yet the Executive Government spend £1,200 a-year in protecting it. Do you not know that in this you are encouraging a bad spirit in these men, that if he was at home as he ought to be the Government would not have to spend this money, and the result would be better both for him and the Government. I have given these cases because they strongly illustrate the motives we have of inquiring into these cases of police protection. The naked fact that there are 2,000 or 3,000 people in Ireland needing police protection looks exceedingly bad before the country, but if the Committee analyzes case by case they will succeed in breaking down the force of the argument, and reducing the case of the Government into a poor one indeed. There are two other subjects I will draw attention to, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will give some explanation. First of all, I refer to the case of the literature which is circulated in the police barracks in Ireland. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, there ought to be no supervision over the literature of the force, but does the right hon. Gentleman contend seriously it is open for anyone to stick up in the barrack day room a cartoon from *United Ireland* or any other Nationalist newspaper? I should like to see the men stick up cartoons from English comic papers, but there ought to be the same rights given to any constable, whatever his creed or politics, but I do not believe that a policeman would be permitted to stick up in the barrack day-room cartoons from the Nationalist papers in Ireland. What we object to is this. Do one thing or the other, either make a rule that no Party literature is to be introduced, or, if it is allowed, make no distinction by which men are permitted to stick up only grossly offensive placards and caricatures which are insulting to those men of the force who are Catholics and Nationalists. I will conclude what I have to say by alluding to some proceedings of the police at Bodyke on Colonel O'Callaghan's estate the other day. The tenants are now in possession of their holdings, and are prepared to submit to the consequences imposed by the law upon those who go back upon their holdings. The law provides a stringent remedy, and if there is one thing more than another to be insisted on it is that when you make a law stringent you should observe it in all respects. The police on this estate go round in squads, and terrify the people. When they see a door open, they rush in, and sometimes burst the door open and frighten the lives out of the women and children; they rush in, and generally conduct themselves in a very offensive and grossly illegal way. There is no necessity for it, for it is open to them to summon all these people before the Court, and deal with them there. I maintain they have no right to do as they have been doing, and that it is unnecessary and monstrous to allow these policemen to rush about like so many bullies trying to intimidate and frighten the people. What I want to know is, upon what authority they do it? I contend that that part of the Crimes Act relating to re-taking possession is most brutal, and that it ought not to be enforced by the Government; and, further, that this abominable system of police patrols, without any law at their back, ought not to be allowed. These people are prepared to go to prison, and to stand the worst the Government can do, but I protest, in the strongest way I can, against the brutal insults offered by the police to women and children.

Mr. CHANCE (Kilkenny, S.): I desire to make some remarks upon an item in this Vote, and to ask for some explanation upon it. Some time ago the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for East Essex (Major Rasch) made some very sensible observations as to the extraordinary military character of the Irish police, and gave it as his opinion that the force should be as much as possible civilized. He emphasized his observations by saying he had some experience of Ireland, and as he did not go there as a Crown official, or as a member of the landlord class, he was in a position to give an unbiased and a fair judgment, but I think that hon. and gallant Member would be rather surprised if he looked at Sub-head H. He would there see that the ammunition provided for the force cost last year £150, but that under the rule of a Unionist Government, provision has been made for the purchase of ammunition of the value of £650 for this year. I know that the police have their weapons, that they have bayonets, and I admit it is reasonable they should have some ammunition for their firearms. As was proved by that affair in Youghal, a policeman with a bayonet can hardly be expected to murder more than one man at a time. In that case the policeman pursued him and killed him on the spot, sending his bayonet into the man's spine. The police generally pursued these running people, even into private houses, where they had no right to go; but they were unable to do to death more than one of these people who were running away. Therefore, firearms are so much more superior to the bayonet. Of course, with firearms, even though a crowd is running away, you can shoot them down at a distance of 200 yards. Formerly the police were armed with firearms that fired a bullet, but they were not good enough shots to bring down their men. I admit that in a dense crowd the odds were that a policeman would lodge the bullet in someone; but lately the Government appear to have discovered that dense crowds are a rarity—except in Belfast, but there it would be criminal to interfere with riots when they bear a political complexion—and accordingly the old bullets were discarded in favour of the buckshot cartridge. Many hon. Members may not thoroughly understand what that is. These cartridges have the ordinary charge of powder, perhaps a little less, and a certain number of buckshot, the interstices being filled with plaster of Paris. When the cartridge is fired it goes solid for a certain distance, and then opens and scatters so that the police are able to fire with a better chance of hitting and killing someone. The buckshot is large enough to kill at 100 yards, or even at 150 yards, and as the shots spread, I have no doubt whoever invented this method of assassination prides himself upon the increased returns the Government are likely to get for the ammunition expended. Up to the present about 30,000 rounds have been issued for the use of the police every year, costing £150. Taking the outside price for these cartridges to be 10*s.* per 100—though I believe the cost is something nearer 8*s.* per 100—£150 would represent 30,000 rounds. This year the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has taken provision for 130,000 rounds, £500 additional for the declared object of buying an extra 100,000 rounds of this ammunition. The financial year ends on the 31st March next, and this addition, if it is to be expended at all, will have to be expended within the next six months. I assume that every hon. Member of the Committee admits that up to the present the principal duty of the Police Force in Ireland has been to aid at evictions. Last year you had the disturbing element in the case of the Belfast riots, but I assume there is no intention now on the part of the police to use buckshot or any other weapon upon the loyal and patriotic rioters of Belfast. The Land Act of the Government has been described by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. J. Chamberlain) as a boon which has put a stop to evictions, except those that are just evictions, and therefore I think I am entitled to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary if he would be good enough to explain to the Committee on whom it is intended to expend this additional 100,000 rounds of ammunition, for the purchase of which this additional sum of £500 has been asked from the Committee? I think it is absolutely necessary and highly desirable for the Representatives of the Irish people, upon whom the police most likely will utilize this ammunition, to ask the right hon. Gentleman to sketch out for us, as near as he possibly can, upon whom this ammunition is to be expended, and for what operations in Ireland he proposes it shall be used? Of course this ammunition is not got for nothing, and if it is not absolutely necessary, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to submit to a large reduction in this special item. It seems to me that if he gets this large amount of ammunition in this present year for the benefit of these police constables, it seems to me to indicate to them—I am sure it is untrue, and has not entered the mind of the Government—they are to inaugurate in Ireland a reign of legalized police assassination and murder, that they are to consider the tenantry of Ireland as so many partridges to be shot down in a *battue.* I trust that is not the case, but I wish to learn why four times the amount of former years is required in the present year?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: With regard to the last question, as to the ammunition, the amount under the subhead is about the average. The explanation is very simple. There is now very little ammunition in store, and the increased amount is to replenish the stores. It must also be remembered that the Constabulary require a large quantity of ammunition for the course of musketry instruction they have to go through every year.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough): I can bear testimony to the military character of the police in Ireland, and I would ask whether there is any reason why at every little roadside station, where there is scarcely anything to shelter them, you should be confronted with a military man, fully armed with his rifle and bayonet, as if a foreign force were expected by the next train? Is there not a better means of utilizing the men in Ireland than this extraordinary method? The only reason that has been given for the great expense occasioned by this extraordinary system, apart from historical reasons, is the agrarian agitation of hon. Members below the Gangway. But is not the answer to that suggestion to be found in every report of every Commission that has gone from Parliament to Ireland, and studied the agrarian question? It is too late in the day now to ask Englishmen to be satisfied, and go on paying this extraordinary charge, when the whole cause of the agitation arises from the distress and misery of the people. I only wish to say this in conclusion. Speaking to one of the officers of the Constabulary last year, in County Limerick, an officer who had no Nationalist proclivities, and asking him about the condition of things, he said—"Many of the people are hungering, and I scarcely know what they will do in the winter." I said—"Have you much difficulty with larceny?" and he said—"No, not much to speak of." "Anything to complain of in drinking?" "No, except at fair times." I said—"I suppose the serious difficulty arises from the agrarian question?" "Well," he said, with a sort of smile, "if the people were allowed to live upon their holdings at rents they can fairly pay, all the agitators in the world could do us no harm whatever." I think it is time, on behalf of the taxpayers in this country, that this should come to an end.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I should have liked to have spoken on this subject at greater length, if there had been more time. I had altogether 37 cases to make out, but I can assure hon. Gentlemen I shall not go into all of them now—I will only refer to two or three. There is one case in particular that I should very much have liked to have spoken upon, but I apprehend I should do better to defer it to some future occasion. I, once in my life, was surprised from the blow of a policeman's baton—the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) suffered from the police, but he became the hero of Cremorne, whereas I became the victim of police misapprehension. But I will defer my case in regard to the Sub-Inspector to a future and more convenient occasion. Several instances I have already brought before the House in the course of the present Session, and had I received an answer couched in the tone one would expect from the right hon. Gentleman—had I received anything like a satisfactory answer—I should not have brought forward these cases, but I will only give two or three of them on this occasion. The first instance, I will call attention to is the case of Sabina Murphy, which I brought before the House before. Sabina Murphy lived in the vicinity of Millstreet; and in the early portion of last year, hon. Members will recollect—as a great point was made about this case by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—this girl was maltreated, her hair chopped off, and midnight ruffians poured gallons of tar on her head. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary denounced this terrific outrage in a way which only his mellifluous eloquence could; but what happened? Sabina Murphy, after this outrage, was visited by—amongst the police—one young man whom this girl dearly and fondly loved. Well, Sir, the Sub-Inspector of the Constabulary, who is a short thick-set young man, favoured the alliance between this young woman and Sub-Constable Austen, in hopes something might turn out for the benefit of Her Majesty's Government. What, then, happened? According to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, Her Majesty's Government were determined to make a swoop somehow and somewhere, and, accordingly, arrested a number of men who lived in the vicinity. Having arrested these men, and lodged them in Millstreet, they wanted to justify their action, as there was absolutely no evidence against them; so they put the screw on Sub-Constable Austen, and he, in his turn, was to put the screw on this girl he was going to marry. Sabina Murphy did not seem to see it, and she refused to be any party to such a really underhand proceeding. If Her Majesty's Government wanted to do it let them do it themselves. What, then, happened? This girl got married to Austen, and after she was married Austen was brought back to this Millstreet district, and kept in communication with the police, in order, with the aid of his wife, to fix the crime on some one of these men. The girl told the story herself in a letter which she addressed to one of the Cork newspapers—*The Cork Daily Herald.* The girl's statement, since then, has been confirmed by her husband; and it appears from this that Sub-Inspector Smith—this gentleman who I have many more charges against—this Sub-Inspector of the Millstreet district tried to get her to bear false evidence against the men arrested by the Government. That is proved beyond all doubt; and the right hon. Gentleman ought to know that if he does not. What happened then? When this girl and the Sub-Constable both refused to bear false witness against their neighbour the Government were sold on their job, and, being sold on their job, they were determined to get rid of the whole lot, and they gave this unfortunate man notice to quit. To my certain knowledge he was in the infirmary in the City of Cork, and being the tool of Her Majesty's Government—but being unable to work out the ends they designed him to work out—he very nearly lost his reason. He was in the north infirmary at Cork for a fortnight. After he came out of the hospital he went back to duty for a fortnight, and then was dismissed the Constabulary. Directly on his being dismissed the Constabulary he appealed to the people in the vicinity, and addressed letters to the Press; and then what did the Government do? They said—"Do, for goodness sake, go in peace, Austen! Do not throw any more light on that moonlighting expedition. Go in peace; and we will get you a place in the City of Liverpool police." If ever there was a job in this country this was one—commencing with the right hon. Gentleman's statement in this House, and winding up in this ignoble way with the Government slinking from their guns, shirking their responsibility, and getting this man a place in the Liverpool police. That is the outcome of a tale of bogus outrage which was commended to the consideration of this House by the right hon. Gentleman in his speech at the commencement of this Session. I told you that I only intended to mention one or two cases. I would like to give you at least another case; but I will refrain. But I hope that the one I have given will sink deep into the *dilettanti* mind of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. It may, at all events, take root and bear good fruit, if it falls on good soil. Apologizing for trespassing, even in this brief way, upon the time of the House, I will only say, in conclusion, that even if the right hon. Gentleman does not listen to what I have said, it may reach the ears of the English people, who are his masters and paymasters.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.): I should like to know how the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland accounts for the continuous increase of the Pension List of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and where he intends to draw the line. The total number of police in Ireland is 12,404, and there are no fewer than 5,333 pensioners. Now, that is a state of things which, I dare to say, it would be difficult if not impossible to parallel in any country but Ireland, and which would not be permitted in Ireland under a native Government. How does it arise? Reference has been made to the fact that the Irish police are more a military than a civil body. Just about the time that a policeman would be able to discharge his duty as a police officer efficiently he is thinking about retiring, owing to his distaste for the barrack-room life, for being hampered with military equipments, and for being compelled to patrol the roads day and night under arms as if he were in an enemy's country. Then, owing to the unpleasant nature of the work that the police are called upon to discharge, there is great anxiety amongst the older members to get away on pension; and, at the same time, the younger men of the force have to be induced to remain by removing the sergeants and head constables, and thus opening out the path of promotion to the younger men. Now, I should like to know what the right hon. Gentleman has got to say about this condition of things—whether he has any explanation to offer? Then there is another matter which, though small in itself, is of considerable importance to the constituency I have the honour to represent. I put, a short time ago, a Question to the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He did not answer it himself, but put up the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) not to answer, but to "bluff" the Question, and to throw ridicule on it. It related to an outrage which was perpetrated on a poor man, one of my constituents. This man was in the habit of serving bread at the house of the District Inspector. When he called at the house for this purpose on one occasion, the District Inspector summoned him into his presence. When the poor man came into the room where the District Inspector was, that officer seized him by a long beard which he wore, dragged him to a table in the centre of the room, took a large pair of sheers off the table, and while his son held him, cut his beard off close to the chin. These facts were sworn to by the man in his affidavit. Now, how did the Inspector meet the charge when an action was immediately afterwards brought against him? He swore that he committed no assault, and that no violence was used—that all that happened was that with the full consent of the man, he clipped about an inch off his beard. Further, he got the case put off until the Summer Assizes; and then before the case came on, he settled with the man by paying him £20 and all expenses, rather than allow the case to go into Court. Now, one of the statements made by the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland in connection with this case was, that the alleged assault occurred six months ago, and that in the meantime, a witness whom the District Inspector could have called in support of his statement had left the country. But the fact of the matter was that there were three or four ladies and gentlemen present at the time, who could have borne witness in favour of the District Inspector, had he chosen to go into Court and had the facts been as he had stated them. This may sound a rather small affair. It seems a trifling thing in the eye of the right hon. Gentleman that a poor man was assaulted in this way. But would he like to have such an assault committed on himself? And if he would not like to have such an assault committed on himself, what right has he to assume it may be committed with impunity on any of Her Majesty's subjects, however humble he may be? I hope that before the decision of the Committee is taken on this Vote, we shall have some more satisfactory account of this affair from the right hon. Gentleman. Apart from the assault, it is quite clear that the District Inspector committed perjury. He swore falsely in his affidavit and he, in effect, acknowledged this by afterwards paying £20 and all expenses. Now, in view of the extraordinary powers which even at any ordinary time are vested in a District Inspector's hands in Ireland, and of the still greater powers which will be vested in his hands under the Coercion Act, I ask are not the people of Dundalk and its vicinity justified in looking with some concern to the fact that this man will be allowed to remain in our neighbourhood—seeing his temper and the fact that he has no regard for an oath? I might, if I chose, make out a case from other circumstances against this District Inspector Supple, and the way in which he discharges his ordinary duties. Walking through the streets of Dundalk, a short time ago, I was followed by a half-witted creature—who made use of the most filthy and abusive language; and though this occurred near the centre of the town not a constable could for a long time be found. To escape from the annoyance, I went with a gengentleman to an hotel close by, and when there my attention was attracted to a crowd higher up, and there were two men in the middle of the street boxing in their shirt-sleeves in full view of the hotel windows. They fought for 15 minutes in the centre of the town with their seconds about them, and there was not a policeman to interfere. Before I left, I saw two armed and mounted constables ride off into the country as if they were going out to meet a foreign enemy. This is the way the time of the men is spent under the direction of District Inspectors like Mr. Supple. Their time is wasted in patrolling the country by day and night with arms in their hands, instead of attending to the ordinary duties of police. I will not, however, dwell on the matter further this evening; but I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary whether he has any intention of taking further steps in connection with this inspector? The Parliamentary Under Secretary said that Mr. Supple had been severely admonished from Dublin Castle. But will a severe admonition meet a case of this kind? If a young constable had committed this assault, and had also committed perjury, he would have been dismissed the force immediately. What action is to be taken against this man who has spent 30 years in the force, and now occupies a responsible position? It is, I think, a case which calls for a thorough investigation.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): I do not intend to refer to many of the topics which have been referred to this evening, though there is not a Member from Ireland who could not add something to the exposure of the faults of the police. I want to call attention to the supply of clothing to the Irish Constabulary. There is a Vote of £33,632 on account of this clothing. Now, in the Division of Dublin which I represent, there was a large clothing factory, and the proprietor of this factory complained to me that he did not get any fair opportunity of putting in a tender for the supply of Constabulary clothing. Such short notice, he said, was given when clothing was required, that it was impossible for Irish firms to compete with the authorities in London. I found then, to my great surprise, that the supply of Constabulary clothing came under the War Office, and what I want to call attention to is the desirability of having the police clothing made up in some Department connected with the Constabulary itself. This is an organization confined solely to Ireland, though it is one of a military character. It has no other connection with the Army, and it seems strange that their clothing should not be made up, as other supplies for the Constabulary are provided, by some Department connected with the Constabulary, and not by the War Office. I hope the attention of the Irish Government will be directed to this matter, and that something will be done to enable Irish establishments to get a fair share of these contracts. Another question to which I wish to call attention is the condition of the Constabulary barracks; £32,000 is voted in these Estimates for Constabulary barracks. That shows that Constabulary barracks are generally rented and are not the property of the Government. I know that in many country towns the Constabulary are very badly housed, and that the sanitary condition of the barracks is very bad. Besides that, in many towns many prisons have, under the new prison system, been closed up. The consequence is that there are no places to put prisoners except some miserable dens, where they are confined under conditions of great hardship until the Director orders their removal to one of the larger prisons. One of the recommendations of the Prisons' Commission was that licensed lock-ups should be provided in lieu of the disused prisons, but this has not been done. No lock-ups have been provided. I do not know whether my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) will be satisfied with the discussion that has taken place on the points he has raised; but I cannot think that the Chief Secretary for Ireland has given a satisfactory answer to one at least of the questions raised by the hon. Member for West Belfast. I refer to the Chief Secretary's answer in regard to the Police Fund, for I think the case for some investigation in respect to that fund seems overwhelming. The evidence goes to show that nobody knows anything about it. If so, I think it is clear that a thorough investigation should take place.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co. N.): I want to know whether late Constable Macfarlane, who figured so conspicuously in the evidence before the Belfast Riots Commission, is still in the employment of the Government, or has been promoted? And I wish to give Notice that if the Chief Secretary for Ireland does not answer the question now, or gives an unsatisfactory answer, I will bring the matter up again on the Report of Supply.

Mr. SEXTON: I am willing to defer any further discussion on the questions I have raised until the Report is brought up. I suppose the Government will report Progress after this Vote is disposed of.

Mr. T. P. GILL (Louth, S.): It is positively disgraceful that a man who has been publicly found guilty of committing an assault, and also of committing perjury, should occupy an influential position in an important town like Dundalk. I hope the Government will give some assurance that the man will be properly punished.

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY for IRELAND (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): The hon. Member opposite (Mr. Nolan) did me an injustice in saying that I was put up to "bluff" the question to which he referred. I investigated the case which he mentioned as far as I could, and I intended by my answer to convey censure of the officer referred to—District Inspector Supple. I said that he had been severely reprimanded by the Police Authorities, and that a reprimand to a Constabulary officer of his standing was a very serious matter. With regard to the questions of the hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy), I cannot answer them at present.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Will some steps be taken to curb the impetuosity of District Inspector Smith?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: His conduct will be inquired into. I cannot now say more than that there shall be an inquiry. As to the clothing of the Constabulary, that is provided for by the Army Authorities. There is a certain amount of Army clothing supplied from Ireland; but I quite agree with the hon. Member that more clothing should be supplied from Ireland.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 107; Noes 50: Majority 57.—(Div. List, No. 432.) [2.0 a.m.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I desire to say that I confirm the remarks made by the Chief Secretary, and that I find that he was right and I was wrong in regard to the man Weldon.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARIES BILL.—[Bill 327.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Jackson, Mr. Long.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Mr. ANDERSON (Elgin and Nairn): I am surprised to find that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) proposes the second reading without any explanation or statement in reference to this Bill, because hon. Members who have read it will have some difficulty in understanding the necessity or occasion for having the Bill at all. The Government seem to think it is necessary to have a Commission to settle the boundaries of areas in England; but may I point out that although several Local Government Bills have been introduced before, it has never occurred to a Government to have a Bill of this kind, nor has it been thought necessary to set up an expensive machinery of this kind, to appoint a Commission to go into every county in England for the purpose, so far as I understand, of assisting the Government in coming to a conclusion as to what their scheme of local government shall be. Now, the first provision is that a Commission shall be appointed to inquire into the best mode of adjusting the boundaries of counties and their areas, and the best mode of dealing with portions of counties partly or wholly detached, and where the Sanitary Authority is divided. Now, if there is one thing that is well known it is the great inconvenience of local areas, that is well known and the county map will show that. The Local Government Board has only to apply to Local Authorities and Unions, to obtain a map showing the various boundaries and where and how they overlap. But it will be a useless waste of time and expense to appoint a Commission for the purpose, and bearing in mind that it has never been done before, and that the Bill is entirely novel, I should have expected from the Government some statement upon it. I am sure the House will agree that in all Commissions for boundaries, it is usual to settle your boundary after you have settled what you are going to set up within that boundary; but here it seems to me the Government are "putting the cart before the horse." You are setting up an expensive machinery for ascertaining boundaries, and for what? For a scheme of local government you have not brought forward, on which you have not informed the House. You are going to send Commissioners all over the kingdon to settle boundaries, but what for? I do not know, and I question if the Government know; and if they do know, it is not at all likely the House will accept the scheme. I cannot help thinking that this is an attempt at the end of the Session, the Government finding they cannot bring in a Bill, not being in agreement on the subject—an attempt to show they have done something, and I can imagine the Chancellor of the Exchequer in those speeches in the country which I see he is going to deliver, enlarging upon the importance of the step taken by the Government in passing this Bill. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer must know perfectly well, for his experience on this subject is very great, that we have never before agreed to such a measure as this; that it has never been suggested by anyone to have as a preliminary step, an expensive, long, and tedious inquiry on the subject. What is it that the Commission will have to do? They will go into every county of England and make inquiry—as to what I really do not know—["Hear, hear!"]—and I do not think hon. Members who cheer know it either—I am sure they do not. This Bill seems to me a perfect sham. I have attempted to put myself in the position of a Commissioner going down into the counties to consider their boundaries; but I defy hon. Members to say what are the duties and functions of a Commissioner when he is appointed, unless he knows what the scheme of the Government is as to local government. When you have decided that which depends on population and various other things, whether you are to have representative Boards, or whatever they are to be, then, I can understand a Commission going down and fixing the boundaries of local areas. That is my first objection, and I am curious to hear, and the House is entitled to hear some explanation of this measure. Another objection is, that the scope of this Bill is confined to England. Now, if I understand the object of this measure, it is for the purpose of saving time; as I understand the Government, they say that unless this Bill is passed, we shall have local government for England thrown over for another year. Well, so far as the present Government is concerned, I think it will be thrown over for many years; but my chief objection, as representing a Scotch constituency, is that you are taking no step whatever in regard to local government for Scotland. Now, if there was one thing prominent in the address of every Member opposite to his constituents, it was a declaration in favour of a "large and extended measure of local government applied to all parts of the United Kingdom;" and I really want to know why it is that Scotland is left out of the Bill. I asked the First Lord of the Treasury to-night, but he did not seem to know whether there was to be a Local Government Bill for Scotland. I do not know whether he is aware of such a Bill being contemplated; but as the Representative of a Scotch constituency, I do insist that on the question of local government, Scotland is entitled to equal consideration with England. If this Bill is necessary to expedite the bringing forward of your English Bill, then, surely, it is equally necessary for Scotland? If the Government say they are going to legislate for England next year and not for

Scotland, then I shall certainly oppose this Bill, for you certainly ought to legislate for England and Scotland together. The real fact is, I believe, that the Government have given no consideration at all to the question of local government for Scotland. It is part and parcel of the manner in which the Government have treated Scotch Business throughout the Session; they seem to disregard the existence of Scotland. I now ask the right hon. Gentleman who has charge of this Bill—I understand a Bill for the local government of England is actually drafted—has a Bill for Scotland been drafted? This is a question I may fairly ask. Well, it is clear the question is inconvenient, and when a question is inconvenient it is considered out of Order. The conclusion I draw from there being no reply to a perfectly fair question is the conclusion the people of Scotland will draw. I say this is not a fair way of treating this question, though hon. Members opposite agree with it. The want of a comprehensive scheme of local government is as much needed in Scotland as in England, and it is as much a burning question. There are as many difficulties in regard to boundaries. Surely it is not unreasonable that when you are seriously bringing forward a Bill—if serious it is, which I rather venture to doubt—that Scotland should be treated in a similar manner. Therefore I desire, my first objection to the Bill itself being that it is put forward without explanation; and, secondly, that it does not propose to deal with Scotland, to move that the Bill be read a second time this day three months.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee) seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day three months."—(*Mr. Anderson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The first complaint of the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Anderson) is that I made no statement on moving the second reading, and I will explain why I made no statement. The hon. and learned Gentleman must be aware that this Bill has been the subject of question and answer on more than one occasion lately, and in my answers I have had occasion to explain generally and shortly why it is that the Government are bringing in the Bill. That being so, and there being no Amendment given Notice of, I thought it more convenient to the House to wait until hon. Members who desired to have any further information had put their questions, and then I intended to make a reply, an opportunity for which would not be presented, if I had made a statement first, and no Amendment was moved. The hon. and learned Member complains that no statement or explanation of the Bill is made, and expresses his own utter ignorance of the Bill. Well, I quite admit it is a reasonable thing to ask for an explanation in the House; but of all Members I think he is the least justified in taking up the position he has taken; because I took the trouble, in reply to his questions, to enter very fully into the scope and purpose of the Bill, and I thought I had explained the measure to his entire satisfaction. I understood he was perfectly satisfied.

Mr. ANDERSON: The conversation I had with the right hon. Gentleman was purely private, and I understand it is a rule laid down that such conversations are not to be made public in the House.

Mr. RITCHIE: I have not the slightest intention of making our private conversation public. I merely refer to it to show that he really has some ground for knowing what the Bill is. However, the hon. and learned Gentleman takes up the ground that he really does not understand that there is any object to be served by the Bill, and goes on to say that he did not believe there was any idea on the part of the Government of dealing with the question at all, that they merely intended to make some show of being busy. I can understand he is annoyed at the determination of the Government to carry out the pledges they have given to deal in a full and comprehensive manner with the question of local government. I do not know whether he was in the House the other day when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) made some observations on the Bill in reply to my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), when he stated what Bills the Government intended to proceed with? On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby said he was very glad the Government intended to proceed with the Boundaries Bill; because he looked upon it as a thing altogether unobjectionable and absolutely necessary before any question of local government could be entertained. The hon. and learned Member is not evidently in accord with a distinguished Leader of his Party. Anybody who has studied the subject of local government, which evidently the hon. and learned Member has not, must be perfectly well aware how impossible it is to settle any scheme without first dealing with the question of overlapping areas. In the Bill we had prepared and hoped to introduce this Session, we had clauses for the appointment of a Commission for dealing with this point; and when we found, from circumstances not necessary now to deal with, that we could not bring forward the Bill this Session, we thought it a pity that this portion of the Bill, which is in no sense of the term a Party question at all, should not be proceeded with, and so we submit it to the House in this separate form. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman is, perhaps, aware that there are a large number of Unions in England and Wales, which overlap two or more counties, and he ought to know it is quite impossible to set up a representative county assembly without getting your rating areas within your County boundary. Therefore, it is essential that Unions and Sanitary areas should be brought within the county, whatever the system of county government shall be so long as it is representative. That is all the House is now asked to do. The County Authority set up will be a representative one, and it is necessary to get the machinery in order to set up that authority. Now, the hon. and learned Member asks what these Commissioners are to do. It will be their duty, no doubt, through sub-Commissions to inquire into the circumstances of every overlapping area throughout England and Wales, every overlapping Union and every overlapping urban Sanitary Authority, by inquiry and consultation on the spot with Local Authorities. Having obtained this data, they prepare their recommendations and submit them to the Local Government Board, who will lay them before Parliament. Parliament will not be committed to any part of the scheme proposed by the Boundary Commissioners, and can deal with the proposal in any way it pleases; but it is perfectly manifest to anyone who has studied the subject, that the question of overlapping areas must be dealt with, and surely it is an advantage to set to work at once to prepare the material for the scheme. This is a measure that has received the assent of nearly everyone, it is in no sense contentious; it is to enable necessary work to be done, and I hope the House will now pass the second reading.

MR. ANDERSON: And in reference to Scotland?

MR. RITCHIE: Oh, yes! I beg pardon. The hon. Gentleman says it is a bad Bill, and complains that it is not applied to Scotland.

MR. ANDERSON: No; I said unnecessary.

MR. RITCHIE: It is unnecessary, says the hon. Gentleman; why not apply it to Scotland? Well, I may say we do propose to deal with local government in Scotland as well as England. Local government for England is first to be dealt with next Session, and we believe the investigation of the Commissioners between now and then will be of such a character as to guide us very considerably in the preparation of a Bill for Scotland. A Boundary Bill is drafted for Scotland; but we do not produce it, because we think it better to defer the inquiry to the beginning of next Session, when we shall have had the advantage of the experience of the working of this Bill before beginning similar work for Scotland.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): There is one part of the right hon. Gentleman's observations to which I desire to take exception at once, and that is when he taunted my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Anderson) with having had private information. We hear a great deal too much of these private conversations between Members of the Government and Members on this side, and I think my hon. and learned Friend was only discharging his duty to the House, even if he had that full private information which he said he had, in not compelling the Government to make it public to the whole country. There are one or two points that require further information than has been given. Sir, those who have seen this Bill must have seen that it is not a sham Bill; it is, at all events, a skeleton Bill. It is full of blanks, and we are entitled to call upon the Government to fill up those blanks as far as they can. Take the first effective clause, and we find it stated that the following persons are to be Commissioners; but we are given no idea of how many they are to be; all we do know is that there will be more than three, for three are to be a quorum. Now, I think we may fairly ask who the Boundary Commissioners are to be under this Bill. Secondly, provision is made for a secretary; there is to be a paid secretary appointed by the Commissioners. But, no doubt, it is perfectly well known who this gentleman is. Thirdly, provision is made for payment of Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners, though the amount is not named. So the House is asked to commit itself to an unknown amount of expenditure, to an entirely unknown number of people. On all these points we are entitled to ask for information. My experience is not long enough for me to say if this is usual—["Hear, hear!"]—but the experience of hon. Gentlemen who interrupt me is shorter than mine. I do not know whether the Government have precedent for this, or whether it is not usual to fill up these blanks at this stage of a Bill. If it is not usual, neither is it, I am sure, usual to move the second reading of a Bill of this character on the 30th of August. When we consider the lateness of the Session, the important character of the Bill, and the demands its makes on our attention, I think we are entitled, before allowing the Bill to proceed a step further, to ask the Government for full information on all the points to which I have called attention. One thing more, why is this demand made for the appointment of a Commission? My hon. and learned Friend knows perfectly well what has to be done; but he asked why appoint a Boundary Commission to do it? You have a Local Government Board with a large staff, and it is a paragon among Boards, an exception to the whole Civil Service, if its officers have half enough work to do. Why not let this Board do the work necessary under this Boundaries Bill? That, I believe, was the point of the speech of my hon. Friend. And unless the Government give us some further explanation, in lieu of the platitudes to which we have been treated by the right hon. Gentlemen the President of the Local Government Board, I shall certainly vote for the Amendment of my hon. and learned Friend.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): It is quite evident to the sense of this House and of this country why the opposition against this Government Bill is being aroused. We all know that on the Orders of the Day there are several Scotch measures, measures which are most interesting to the people of Scotland, and which the Scotch Members deem to be of very great importance to carry, except, I believe, the two Scotch Members who have taken part in this debate. [*Cries of* "Withdraw!"]

MR. E. ROBERTSON: I rise to Order, Sir. I wish to ask, Mr. Speaker, on a point of Order, whether the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Mark Stewart) is in Order in imputing to the only two Scotch Members who have yet spoken on this Bill, that their motive for opposing it is not opposition to the Bill itself, but is a desire to prevent the House proceeding with the Scotch Orders which are to come on later on?

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot say that the remarks of the hon. Member were out of Order. He did not impute improper motives to the hon. Members.

MR. MARK STEWART: I only wish to say that inasmuch as the Scotch Members have been waiting here the whole of the evening, listening to the dissertations of the Irish Members, it is only fair now that we should have our innings; and I cannot help thinking that though hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side may be quite sincere, and I believe that they are, for I do not wish to impute any improper motive to them, yet I will urge that if they will withdraw this Motion, and let us proceed with the Scotch Business, which is really interesting to us, and which will confer a real benefit upon our country, it will be far better for us all.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I cannot say that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board is at all satisfactory. Either this Bill is unnecessary for England or a similar Bill is necessary for Scotland. There is not a single word in his speech that shows in the slightest degree any attempt on the part of the right hon. Gentleman to escape from the horns of that dilemma. It is evident that though the Government intend to prosecute this Bill for England, they are totally indifferent as to Scotland's wants in the matter; and it seems to me a very large Order to ask of us to give the Government powers to perform duties which, in my humble opinion, might be performed without expense to the country, by officials of the Local Government Board, who are already well paid. There is nothing in this inquiry which requires statutory powers. The Local Government Board ought to make all these inquiries themselves, and unless we get some more satisfactory explanation from the right hon. Gentleman, I trust that the Amendment will be pressed to a Division.

Sir DONALD CURRIE (Perthshire, W.): At 25 minutes to 3 when, as Scotch Members, we are anxious to be taking the Technical Education Bill for Scotland, I think it is rather a pity that the Government should be asked to delay the consideration of this Bill. It is an injustice to the Government and also to the Scotch Members, and it shows an indifference to the wishes of the people of Scotland. In regard to the Local Government Bill, I object for my part to the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Anderson) stating that he is entitled to speak for the Scotch Members as he has assumed to do in this matter. We have had very little time to-day to carry on measures which we anxiously desire to press forward; and the Lord Advocate has most earnestly for hours this evening sought to smooth the way by arranging as to the Amendments which have to be put down for consideration. If Scotch Members think a Boundaries Bill is a necessity for Scotland as well as for England, surely it would be better to let the English measure pass through, and seek subsequently to have it made applicable to their country. I think the sooner we proceed with the Technical Education (Scotland) Bill the better it will be for us all.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I hope that the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Anderson), having drawn attention to his objections to the Bill, will now in deference to the view of the majority of the House allow it to proceed with the Bill. Full information will be given on all the subjects to which attention has been drawn by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Dundee; and I may say that it is not usual to put names in a Bill until the Committee stage has been reached. Full information will then be given to the House, and I trust, therefore, that the hon. and learned Member will withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Before the hon. and learned Member rises, I wish to say that, while concurring in the remarks of the President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Ritchie) as to the necessity of appointing a Commission, I do not think we are all agreed that it is necessary to pass the Bill; and I wish to ask the Government why the course taken in regard to the Redistribution of Seats Bill, which was a measure of far greater importance than this, has not been followed in the present case? In the matter of redistribution of seats, you appointed a Royal Commission, not a single Member of which, except two or three Irish lawyers, got a single sixpence; and you had gentlemen of the greatest eminence, like Sir Francis Sandford, who did the work without pay. You had, too, an admirable Secretary, a Welsh gentleman, who gave most excellent assistance; and I wish to know, this being the case, if you are not able to adopt a similar course in regard to the Boundaries Bill, which naturally will not excite more attention than the Redistribution of Seats Bill. Why is it necessary to pass this Bill at all? Her Majesty's Government could issue a Royal Commission, and appoint the gentlemen necessary without delay. I think this Bill is only necessary as a job. The Tories are in power, and they want to be enabled to appoint their friends to highly-paid posts. Now, Mr. Speaker, I wish to know from the Government—while we all admit fully the necessity of the Commission to delimit these areas—why it is necessary to have this Bill? If the Liberal Government could get distinguished gentlemen to do equally important work for nothing, why should the taxpayers of this nation now be saddled with high salaries to get similar work done? I think this proposal is positively monstrous. Why, they do not even tell us what salaries these gentlemen will get, nor how many Commissioners there are going to be appointed. We are told that not less than three will be a quorum; but you may have 33 appointed if you assent to the second reading of this Boundaries Bill, and the Commissioners may appoint a Secretary and staff; and I therefore submit that this is not a matter which the House ought to be called upon to deal with at this hour of the morning. If we are to admit that this Bill is necessary for England, surely it is also necessary for us in Ireland, and we have not yet heard one word upon the subject of dealing with Ireland in this Bill. It has been admitted that local government of some sort will be of interest for Ireland, at the end of the 20 years of resolute government which we are to have; but why is a Bill of this kind brought in, and no statement whatever made with regard to a similar measure for Scotland or for Ireland? I wish again to point out that these Commissioners could be appointed by Royal Commission, and if a question of salary should have to be raised this year, it could be brought up in the shape of a Supplementary Vote in the Estimates. Therefore, I submit, the Bill is a sham, and is only brought in to enable the Government to say—"We have passed the Boundaries Bill." If the Government can tell me what powers this Bill will confer on them which they would not have in appointing a Royal Commission, my opposition will be considerably modified; but, I think, as Irishmen, we are entitled to some statement on the question of Ireland; and I presume that the question of the delimitation of boundaries in Ireland will require examination and inquiry. We are told it is the intention of the Government to deal with that question; but I submit we are entitled to some explanation of these points; and therefore, while I have no general opposition to the measure except on the ground of economy, and that the Bill is a useless one so far as Ireland is concerned, if it has an interest for England, we ought also to have a similar Bill for Ireland, and before I withdraw my opposition, I must be convinced that powers are to be conferred by the Bill which the Government do not already possess.

MR. RITCHIE: Perhaps the House will permit me to answer this question, although I have no right to speak again in this debate. First, I am asked a question as to the expense, and why the Government do not appoint a Royal Commission, instead of requesting the House to assent to this Bill. The inference is, that in the one case the Commissioners appointed will be paid, and in the other case they will be unpaid. But we do not desire to proceed with it as a purely Government measure, as would be the case were we to appoint a Royal Commission. This is a matter in which the House is deeply interested, and it is desirable that the appointment of a Commission should not partake of the character of a Party or Government proposal. We desire that the House should be a party to the insertion in this Bill of the names of gentlemen who would command the confidence of Members of all sides of the House; and I will inform the hon. Gentleman that I have taken the step of communicating the names of the Commissioners we suggest to the Leaders of the Party opposite, with a view to obtaining their concurrence, not in any way to bind the House, but to obtain their concurrence and their sanction to the insertion of those names in the Bill. I have not yet even asked the Gentleman whom we propose shall be appointed whether or not they will serve, but I have heard that the gentlemen suggested will be generally agreeable to the Leaders of the Party opposite. This is our reason for proceeding by way of Bill rather than by appointing a Royal Commission. As to the question of payment, there is no intention that the Commissioners should be paid. It is perfectly true that power is taken for payment to be made—but that power is a general one—because it may be the case that one or two of the Commissioners may require some little payment for extra trouble which may devolve upon them, and also it may be necessary for them to incur certain expenses. Gentlemen will have to be appointed as Sub-Commissioners, and they, of course, will have to be paid. The hon. Member asks why anyone should be paid, when with reference to the Redistribution Bill everything was done without payment to all. But let me point out that this is a much more difficult problem to solve. In the case of the Redistribution Bill the question of how constituencies should be cut up for Parliamentary revision was one which could be settled to a large extent by maps in a room in Westminster.

Mr. T. M. HEALY : I wish you had some of the Irish inquiries to deal with.

Mr. RITCHIE : But in this case there are many complicated question to be decided, such as the cutting off a piece of a Union which is in one county, and adding a Union which is in another. There are questions involving not only great jealousy, but a great amount of local feeling. There are questions affecting debts, liabilities, and rating, and therefore it is absolutely essential that the inquiries should be made on the spot, and that the recommendation to be made should be based upon full inquiry with the aid of the Local Authorities of the districts that are affected. This can only be done by means of gentlemen sent down for the purpose. The Local Government Board Inspectors will, as far as possible, assist the Commissioners who are appointed; but it is quite impossible that they can do all that is necessary, for the ordinary staff of the Local Government Board are constantly and fully employed in their work. With reference to Ireland, I must say the same as I said in regard to Scotland. There is not the smallest intention on the part of the Government to evade these questions; but it is a somewhat novel matter, and we think, the experience to be gained between now and next year, if this Bill is carried, will largely help us with reference to Scotland and Ireland. I am sure that that is a point which will commend itself to the hon. and learned Member.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Sir, I regret that when I rose just now to continue the discussion, I was not able to catch your eye, for I wanted to make an explanation in regard to this Bill. I have had a block against it for the last fortnight, and on Saturday night last it was my desire to take a block off another Government measure—the Charity Commission (Officers) Bill. Accordingly, I went to the Table and asked that the block should be taken off; but unfortunately a mistake was then and there made, and the block was taken off the Local Government measure, and the Charity Commission Bill remained blocked. It is a most unfortunate occurrence, and I should like to know, Sir, what I am to do under the circumstances?

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot give the hon. Member any advice on the subject.

Dr. TANNER: Then, Sir, as that happens to be the case, I beg to move the adjournment of the debate on this Bill.

[The Motion, not being seconded, was not put.]

Mr. ANDERSON: I am sure, after the statement made by the Government, I ought to accede to the appeal made to me; but, perhaps, I may be allowed to add—in order to show the necessity of the course I took, and as an answer to the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Mark Stewart)—that my objection to this Bill is a serious objection. I gave Notice of that objection months ago, and the ground on which I did so was that it did not include Scotland. I desire the House to understand that I have not taken the objection from any obstructive desire; but I sincerely object to the exclusion of Scotland from the operation of the Bill. I beg to ask leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

LAW OF EVIDENCE AMENDMENT BILL [*Lords*].—[Bill 316.]

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

SECOND READING. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [11th July].

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Is there any hope of carrying this Bill through this Session? It must excite immense opposition, and I would remind the Government that other Bills of more serious importance have been thrown overboard, because a block has been placed against them by Gentlemen sitting behind the Ministerial Bench, for various reasons. Do the Government hope now, at this eleventh hour, by keeping us here a fortnight longer, to be able to pass it?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): I certainly hope that the House will pass this Bill this Session. The Bill has practically received the assent of the Whole House. An exactly similar one was produced by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt). I undertook, on the last occasion, to introduce certain clauses regarding Ireland; and I think it will be a very great loss to the country if this important piece of legislation does not take place.

Adjourned Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

BANKRUPTCY (DISCHARGE AND CLOSURE) BILL.—[BILL 327.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Solicitor General, Baron Henry De Worms.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I beg to move that this Bill be now read a second time. It is simply a measure to provide that outstanding bankruptcies, under the Act of 1869, may be closed. There are some 2,000 of them, and in many of them the bankrupts have not been able to obtain their discharge, simply because there is no machinery whereby they can do so, because the principal creditors cannot be got together. This was a measure the last Government desired to pass when they were in Office. It is a purely formal matter; but it will relieve a large number of persons, and I trust that the House will now read the Bill a second time.

Motion made, and Question "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Attorney General,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 358.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress* 16*th August.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 and 2 severally *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Power for School Board to provide technical school).

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name. Perhaps it would improve the phraseology if I withdrew the Amendment, and used the words "or technical instructing in an existing school."

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 13, after "school," insert "or a technical department in an existing school."—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The expression "technical schools" means a school, or part of school in which technical instruction is given. I think the Amendment is unnecessary.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 17, after "fund," insert "and it shall further be competent for any school board to make such arrangements as they may deem expedient for teaching the principles of agriculture in the elementary schools under their charge, and provide such an area of land by purchase, lease, yearly tenancy, or otherwise, as in their opinion will be sufficient for the purpose of practically illustrating the aforesaid principles."—(*Mr. Macdonald Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE CHAIRMAN: I am of opinion that it is incompetent for the hon. Member to make a proposal which gives power to a school board to buy land for the purposes of technical instruction. The Amendment must stop at the words "under their charge," and the remaining words after that must be omitted.

Amendment amended, and, as amended, again proposed.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): The Bill has nothing to do with agriculture.

MR. HUNTER: I hope the Amendment will be pressed, because I think a distinct provision should be made for instruction in agriculture.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 17, after the word "fund," insert the words "the subjects to be taught in the school shall be such as may from time to time be approved of by the Scotch Education Department."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

To add to the words last inserted—"The school board shall fix the school fees to be paid for attendance at each technical school under their management, and such fees shall be paid to the treasurer of the board, and a separate account shall be kept of the amount of the fees derived from such school; and it shall be lawful for the school board, if they see fit, to pay to the teachers of a technical school the fees derived from such school, and to divide the same among them as the school board shall determine. Any deficiency which may exist in the technical school fund shall be payable out of the school fund provided under the Education (Scotland) Acts, 1872 and 1883."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): If we trust the Local Authority at all, I believe it would be wiser to trust them altogether, without the limitation the 2nd sub-section of this clause imposes, and I therefore move the omission of the sub-section.

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 18, to leave out sub-section (2).—(*Mr. E. Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (2) stand part of the Clause."

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I sincerely hope the hon. and learned Member will not press his Amendment, for I am sure its acceptance would be very unacceptable to the people of Scotland. It would amount to this—that by a single resolution of a school board, and without giving time for consideration, and for the views of the ratepayers to become known, the latter would be involved in a large expenditure. The whole object of the Bill is to allow full consideration, and it is obvious that the whole scope of it would be defeated by adopting this Amendment.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): May I add an additional objection to that urged by the Lord Advocate. The consent of the Education Department is necessary, with a view to the protection of existing technical schools in the district with which the action of a school board might seriously interfere.

Mr. HUNTER: There would be considerable force in what the Lord Advocate has stated if the Bill stood with its original form of procedure for technical schools. But he has accepted an Amendment under which technical classes can be established in any ordinary school. Now, there might be very considerable reason for this provision in view of a large expenditure; but if it is merely a question in some small school of providing special instruction in agriculture or any other subject, it really seems hard that a school board should not be able to do that without all the cumbrous machinery of this Act.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: May I point out that it is simply a question of departmental consent, and that would be required in the case referred to.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Provision for confirmation of resolution with reference to establishment of school).

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 25, after the word "time," to insert the words "not being earlier than one month after the first publication of such resolution."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in line 27, to leave out from the word "order."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That those words be there left out," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In line 28, after "1872," to add, "in considering such resolution of a school board, and before confirming the same, and in sanctioning the subjects to be taught in the proposed technical school, the said Department shall hear all parties interested who may claim to be heard, and shall take into account all technical schools, whether public or not, and whether or not situated in the school board district, which in their opinion gives, or will when completed give in whole or in part, efficient technical instruction for the residents in such school district."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. HUNTER: I object altogether to thus limiting the operation of the Bill, and limiting the powers of the School Board. I am of opinion that the School Board is a very much better judge on questions of this kind than the Education Department. The Amendment is altogether in a retrograde direction. I should like the School Board to have as little to do with the Scotch Education Department as possible. Schools and Education were never so flourishing as when they were left to Local Authorities before the Education Department existed. The effect of the action of the Education Department has been injurious to education, and I cannot support anything that tends to take away the discretion of the Local Authorities, who know best what is wanted in the locality, and give control to the officials in London, who know nothing of what is wanted.

Mr. CALDWELL: The Committee have accepted the principle that the sanction of the Department shall be given before the resolution is carried into effect. ["No, no!"] Yes; it is already provided that a school board shall not carry into effect any resolution for the establishment of a technical school unless it has been confirmed by the Scotch Education Department.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: It has not come to that yet. I have an Amendment.

Mr. CALDWELL: Yes; that is passed.

The CHAIRMAN: Unfortunately, the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Dundee is misplaced on the Paper. We have agreed to strike out from the word "order" to the end of the sub-section. Of course, the Amendment of which the hon. and learned Member has given Notice, to omit the clause altogether, still stands.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: Am I to understand that the sub-section is passed?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes; that is so. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member does not occupy its proper place on the Paper. We have struck out the words at the end of Sub-section 2, so we cannot go back again to the beginning of that sub-section.

Mr. CALDWELL: Referring to the Education (Scotland) Act of 1872, it will be found that a provision there prescribes that no school shall be erected without the consent of the Department, and this clause is identically the same. It is the natural result of what we have already done. It will never do to give a school board power, without the consent of the Educational Department, to establish any kind of technical school for any kind of object they may think fit. If you give them that unlimited power, it must interfere with existing technical schools that are doing efficient work, and you might have two sets of technical schools; the one established by a school board, and having the support of local rates and Imperial taxation, cutting down the other school which was doing its work in a thoroughly efficient manner, on its own resources. It is, in my opinion, necessary to protect existing technical schools, and there is nothing novel in this proposal; it is transposed merely from the Act of 1872, and provides that the Department shall hear all parties. Nobody, I should have thought, would have objected to that.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: Has the Lord Advocate, by private arrangement, accepted this Amendment before it came before the Committee?

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: The hon. Member (Mr. Caldwell) consulted with his Friends and myself, and I agreed to accept the Amendment.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): But does the Lord Advocate think the Amendment is at all expedient or necessary?

Mr. J. H A. MACDONALD: I should have added that my only objection to it was that I thought it was unnecessary; but I see no harm in it, and the hon. Member seemed to think it was desirable that the Department should have its duty indicated.

Mr. BUCHANAN: It may entail considerable hardship on a locality. I disagree with the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division (Mr. Caldwell) that school boards should not be empowered, especially large Boards like those of Edinburgh and Glasgow, to establish technical schools for any object so long as it is sanctioned by the Department, whatever instruction may be given in private schools. The hon. Member urged his Amendment on that ground—that technical schools under the Act should not interfere with existing private technical schools in the school board district—and that is ground upon which I am wholly opposed to him. I do think the Department should consider the representations made to it; but surely it is not necessary to introduce such elaborate instructions as to the way in which the Department should perform this portion of its duty. I think we ought to minimize the action and control of the Department in all details as much as possible.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): I hope my hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell) will consent to withdraw the Amendment. It is perfectly evident from what we have heard on all sides that the words are not absolutely necessary, and if my hon. Friend wishes to get on with the Bill I would advise him to make this concession to the opinion of the Scotch Members. He will see that the opinion of his Scotch Colleagues is against the introduction of this extra clause.

Mr. CALDWELL: I would adopt the advice did I not think the Amendment is essential. I repeat there is nothing new about it; it is simply the transfer of a clause that already exists in the Elementary Education Act. All it does simply amounts to this—that the Education Department shall have absolute power to sanction a scheme or not; and there can be no doubt that the only way to come to a fair decision on the proposal is to give the opportunity for the hearing of all parties. Surely this is reasonable?

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE: It may be a moot point whether the Amendment is necessary or not; but I may point out that the clause would impose no restraint upon the school board, which would have absolute freedom of action under the Bill.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: This Amendment affords an extraordinary example of the extreme inconvenience of attempting to proceed with the Bill at this hour, because it relates to Scotland. The Lord Advocate is obliged to get up, and confess that he agreed to accept the Amendment, though he considered it unnecessary, and the only excuse he can give takes the form of a ponderous joke, that if the Department does not know its duty, it is well to have that duty defined. I think the Committee will see that all this private arrangement, this lobbying, and caucussing in which this measure was born, has lead to an extremely inconvenient result. I think the Lord Advocate ought to resign the conduct of the Bill to my hon. Friend the Member for the St. Rollox Division (Mr. Caldwell). We have already unknowingly accepted an Amendment of which I know Scotch Members disapprove almost unanimously.

Mr. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I would recommend my hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell) to withdraw his Amendment. It may lead to inconvenience, and I think it is mere surplusage. Let us drop the point, and get on with the Bill.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: After the expression of opinion we have had, I think the hon. Member might withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I have now to move the omission of the clause, and the reasons for my doing so will appear, I think, from the discussion that has already taken place. The feeling of Scotch Members is entirely against this centralized control set up by the clause. We have no confidence in the authority to which the Government propose to entrust the control of this system of technical instruction; they propose to give to the clerks at Dover House a power they will not trust with the people of the locality whose interests are directly concerned. I shall take the opinion of the Committee on the clause.

Amendment proposed, to leave out Clause 4.—(*Mr. E. Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That Clause 4, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

Mr. MASON: I would suggest that we should leave the clause as it stands, and deal with the conditions of the control of the Department by Amendments to Clause 5.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: May I be allowed to remind hon. Members that this is not an opportunity for reforming the Central Authority that regulates Scotch educational matters. If that Department stands in need of reform, then let it be altered; but, so long as it continues to be the authority, its functions must be exercised under this Bill.

Mr. HUNTER: That is an extraordinary doctrine to apply to the present occasion. The Bill proposes to give an entirely new power to this Scotch Authority. As to the powers it exercises under the Elementary Education Act, that is not before us here, we are asked to confer a new power, and we are entitled to ask why it is. It is preposterous to deny that power to such Local Authorities as those of Glasgow, Edinburgh, or Aberdeen, in local matters which you propose to give to a few gentlemen at Dover House. I remember when the subject was under discussion we were told that the staff at Dover House was necessarily very small, and it is not to be compared with the boards in the towns I have mentioned.

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): There may be faults in the Department; but we must remember that it is the Scotch Educational Authority, and the medium by which Government grants are obtained. I think the school boards themselves will admit the desirableness of retaining the clause.

Mr. BUCHANAN: I hope my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. E. Robertson) will not divide on this question. If he wishes to raise the point, I think he could do so more substantially in reference to the next clause, not this in regard to which I am afraid many of us cannot support him.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 81; Noes 31: Majority 50.—(Div. List, No. 433.) [3.20 a.m.]

Clause 5 (Conditions under which schools are to be conducted).

Amendment proposed,

In line 1, to leave out the word "shall," and insert "if it claim a grant from the Department of Science and Art, shall, with respect to any subject for which such grant is claimed."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'shall' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. HUNTER: I now beg to move that Progress be reported, and, after a reference to the hour, I think it is unnecessary to add any argument in support of the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I think we might take the clause first; it involves no disputed point.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words proposed be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): On behalf of my hon. Friend the Member for Falkirk (Mr. Sinclair), I beg to move the Amendment that stands in his name. All parties, I think, will be in favour of omitting these words. ["No!"] My hon. Friend thinks not, but they are provided for by another Amendment, and it seems to me a vital point. There may be in existence minutes that would affect the working and operation of the Bill, and they ought to be in some form for us to take cognizance of.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, Subsection 3, lines 11 and 12, to leave out the words "not in force at the passing of this Act."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I wish to point out that the Committee has been misled. I have been completely by the remark of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate, a few minutes ago, in asking my hon. Friend (Mr. Hunter) to withdraw his Motion. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said there was no disputed point in the clause; but I find——

The CHAIRMAN: If the hon. and learned Member does not propose to move his Amendment standing before this one, then I must put this Amendment.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: I am going, Sir, to ask a question upon this Amendment. I was misled by what the Lord Advocate said, and I did not take the trouble to look at the Amendments. But I find there is an important Amendment of my own to leave out Sub-section 2. [*Laughter.*] I say, frankly, I took the Lord Advocate's statement to be literally true, and was not paying attention to what was going on. [An hon. Member: Raise it on Report.] It is suggested to me that I should raise the question on Report; but I have had an experience of raising questions on Report, and it does not encourage me to give away my chance of raising them in Committee. No; once bit, twice shy. My Amendment is to leave out Subsection 2, and the question I ask is—are schools to be admitted to have a Technical Department, if the managers think fit, or are the managers to come up to Dover House to effect their purpose. That is the real point. A grant is not made unless the school obtains a certificate from the Scotch Education Department.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: Will the hon. and learned Member allow me to explain that this is simply the certificate which has to be obtained now from the Scotch Education Department with respect to elementary education.

Amendment (*Mr. E. Robertson*), by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. HUNTER: Before we pass from this, I should like to observe that the certificate which has to be obtained is to the effect that the examination has been passed which is described in the V. Standard.

Amendment (*Mr. Buchanan*) again proposed.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: It would be a great pity to strike out these words, for it would bring about this result—that the present directorate of the Science and Art Department would have to lay on the Table of the House all their rules already in force. As regards future Minutes, they ought to be laid on the Table.

Mr. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.): In the absence of my hon. Friend the Member for Falkirk the Amendment will not be pressed.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

TRAMWAYS (WAR DEPARTMENT) BILL.—[Bill 246.]

(*Mr. Northcote, Mr. Edward Stanhope, Mr. Brodrick.*)

COMMITTEE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [3rd August], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I sincerely hope that this Bill will not be pressed. The Government have got a great number of measures through this evening, and having now arrived at an advanced hour of the night, it would be a great deal better for us to go home to our well-earned repose instead of staying here to debate this measure, with the provisions of which we cannot possibly be acquainted. If this Bill is going to be taken, I, for one, shall criticize it as thoroughly as I can.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): With regard to this question, I do not intend to offer any particular opposition; but I must say we have had no explanation of the provisions of the Bill. It is a measure of which one hon. Member has charge one day and another hon. Member the next, and the Government do not seem to know exactly their own minds with regard to it, for I see the Secretary for War has an Amendment on the Paper to it. After considering the hours of labour the House has already sustained to-night, I think this is eminently an occasion on which we should adjourn. I will, therefore, move "That this Debate be now adjourned."

Mr. SPEAKER: Does any hon. Member second that?

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I will second that.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. M. J. Kenny.*)

The SURVEYOR GENERAL of ORDNANCE (Mr. Northcote)(Exeter): The Bill is purely a Departmental one, having no political character at all. It was drafted originally by the late Administration in 1885, and it was introduced, but it could not be carried through in consequence of the change of Administration. It was introduced because in that year a carriage accident occurred and an action for damages was brought against the War Department, which had no power to resist, because it had no right to construct tramways. A heavy charge was consequently thrown on the taxpayers of the country, and hence this purely Departmental Bill has been introduced, so that in the event of another accident of the kind occurring the War Department will be in a position to resist a similar claim. I hope that, under those circumstances, hon. Members will allow you, Sir, to leave the Chair.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Whenever we object——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is out of order in speaking again.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 20; Noes 63: Majority 43.—(Div. List, No. 434.) [3.40 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town): It is now a quarter to four, and this is not legislation such as we ought to proceed with at this hour of the morning. We have been pretty hard at work for a long time, and it is singularly out of place for the present Government to propose going on at this time, when one of the Rules which they themselves proposed was that the debate should close at 12. I think it is time to put a stop to these proceedings, and, as I am informed, the Bill under consideration is likely to be discussed at some length, I will move that the House do now adjourn.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I am sorry the hon. Member thought it necessary to interpose at this stage. As has been explained, our only object is to get the Speaker out of the Chair, and the hon. Member will surely admit that that will not occupy many minutes; but at this hour in the morning we will not enter into a contest on such a question as this. We will agree to the debate being adjourned.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

LICENSED PREMISES (EARLIER CLOSING) (SCOTLAND) BILL.

CONSIDERATION OF LORDS' AMENDMENT.

[ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [23rd August],

> "That this House doth agree with the Lords in the Amendment in page 3, line 8, to leave out 'ten of the clock at night of any day,' and insert 'such hour at night of any day, not earlier than ten and not later than eleven, as the licensing authority may direct.'"

Question put, and *agreed to.*

An Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

> In page 3, line 28, at end of Clause 9, add "shall not apply to any burgh, town, or populous place containing fifty thousand inhabitants and upwards,"

—the next Amendment, read a second time.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said Amendment."—(*Mr. Mason.*)

The House *divided:*—Ayes 27; Noes 43: Majority 16.—(Div. List, No. 435.) [3.55 A.M.]

Subsequent Amendment *agreed to.*

House adjourned at Four o'clock in the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 30*th August*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Metropolitan Police * (242); Women's Suffrage (5), *negatived.*

Committee — Report — Conveyancing (Scotland) Acts Amendment * (233); Savings Banks and Government Annuities * (243); Sheriff of Lanarkshire * (244).

Third Reading—Stannaries Act (1869) Amendment * (228-249); Trustee Savings Banks * (245-250); Public Libraries (Scotland) Acts Amendment * (238), and *passed.*

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL.—(No. 236.)

(*The Lord Denman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

LORD DENMAN said, he had to apologize to their Lordships for having brought in a second Bill on the same subject. He did so in order to rectify an omission in Bill No. 1 affecting the scope of the measure, and the opposition of the Prime Minister probably arose from the fact of there being another Bill on the same subject in the same Session before their Lordships' House. He begged to move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (The Marquess of LOTHIAN) said, that the course taken by the noble Lord in bringing forward the same Bill after it had been rejected in the earlier part of the Session was of very great importance on account of the question of procedure involved, and propably the most convenient course to take on behalf of the Government would be that he should move the Previous Question. The Bill was introduced on the 31st of January last, on which occasion, on the Motion of the Prime Minister, its consideration was postponed till that day six months. As the noble Lord stated in his remarks on Friday night, the result of that was that the Order for the second reading should have been put down for the 31st of July, which fell on a Sunday, and on that account he was debarred from proceeding on that day. That raised the question whether, when a Motion was carried that a certain Bill be read a second time this day six months, the calendar or lunar month was meant. There was no precedent for a decision on that point in the records of their Lordships' House, but in the other House of Parliament there was an occasion when the question did arise. On the Bill relating to the Parliamentary Franchise a Motion was carried that the Bill be read a second time that day three months, and on that day three months, not three calendar months, but three lunar months. The Bill was put down on the Orders of the Day. Therefore, the precedent was in favour of lunar months rather than calendar months. There was another question deserving of consideration — namely, whether, when a Bill set down for second reading was postponed for a certain number of months, it was not the intention of the House, as it was certainly the understanding, that the Bill should not be pressed again during the same Session. The present was not a proper occasion for setting up such a precedent, and with a view to giving time for further consideration of these questions of procedure he begged to move the Previous Question.

A Question being stated thereupon, the Question was put, Whether the said Question shall be now put? *Resolved* in the *negative.*

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Duke of BUCKINGHAM and CHANDOS) observed, that the Previous Question having been carried, it appeared to him that this left the Bill in the same position —that was to say, it would still remain among the Bills in progress.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY): Quite true.

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS said, it seemed almost desirable that their Lordships should go one step further. The House having on January 31 decided in the case of this particular Bill that it should be read on that day six months, which was, according to all Parliamentary rule, accepted as the form of rejection of the Bill, and the Bill having again been brought forward by the promoter some months afterwards, another question was raised—namely, when the House itself had, by hostile Motion, postponed the Bill to a fixed date six months afterwards, whether it was competent—he had great doubts about it—for the promoter of the Bill of his own accord to take that Bill into his own hands and put it down. He thought the proper course would have been to give Notice of a Resolution to the House that the Bill should be again placed on the Orders. But as it had now been moved and the Previous Question carried, and the question decided that the Question be not now put, he would suggest that it would not be going too far if it was now resolved that the Bill be removed from the list of Bills in progress.

LORD DENMAN said, he claimed a title to address their Lordships on this question. His only object in bringing this Bill forward was to save their Lordships' time and the time of the country, and to do justice to a number of Petitioners who wished to have the right of voting on account of their paying rates and taxes, and he thought the course proposed by the Chairman of Committees would be an extremely harsh proceeding. At the same time he felt that the question was advanced by every discussion—if the Bill had succeeded it would have taken some time to put these women on the register—and he left the responsibility of wasting the time of the country on those who delayed the Bill by special pleading of a most insignificant character.

LORD HALSBURY said, their Lordships were the guardians of the Order of the House, but at the same time he doubted whether the noble Duke would be in Order in making such a Motion without previous Notice. He sympathized with the object of the noble Duke, because if the course taken by the noble Lord could not be pursued, he was not aware of any mode by which a Bill could be killed except by the expiration of the Session. It certainly had been understood that the Motion to read a Bill "this day six months" was only a courteous mode of saying that the Bill was rejected and not merely postponed for a time, although, in the face of such authority as he knew there was to the contrary, he would not profess to give a dogmatic opinion on the subject. The No. 2 Bill had been clearly presented against the Standing Order of the House. Months in Parliamentary Law was the same as in other cases, lunar months, and the six months had expired some time. All he would say was that nothing could be more inconvenient than that the same question should be raised again and again in the same Session in the House, and under the present Rule there was no mode of preventing that being done. When a Bill was ordered to be read on that day six months—that was to say, should be on the Order for second reading—and a noble Lord not having moved it that day six months, it struck him that it became a kind of dropped Order and could only be revived by specific Motion. He was not prepared, however, to defend this part of the Law of Parliament at present; but he thought the question should be settled before any authority was given to the precedent which the noble Lord proposed to initiate. He would suggest that the noble Duke should give Notice of his Motion.

The Duke of BUCKINGHAM and CHANDOS said, he would accept the suggestion of the noble and learned Lord, and give Notice that on the next day the House met he would move that the Women's Suffrage Bill be removed from the list of Bills in progress.

Lord DENMAN said, that he would be most happy to move that the Order for the second reading of the Bill be discharged. He had, he said, reason to think that the noble Marquess the Prime Minister was with him, so far as the Bills went, when he did not prevent him bringing forward the Bill, and he believed no time would be lost by discharging the Order. Other noble Lords like Lord Carnarvon and Lord Napier of Magdala were in favour of the Bill, and he had no fear but that their moral weight would carry it before next General Election. He was quite prepared to move that the Order for the Second Reading be discharged.

Lord HALSBURY said, that it was not competent for the noble Lord to move that Motion now.

REFORMATORY AND INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS—LEGISLATION.

QUESTION.

Viscount BARRINGTON (for Lord Norton) asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether they have prepared a Bill on the Report of the Reformatory and Industrial Schools Commission of 1882-3; and whether any such draft was in the way of consolidation of all existing Acts on the subject, or only in amendment of them; and whether, if the introduction of such a Bill has been prevented by other Business this Session, they will introduce it at the earliest possible period of the next Session?

Earl BROWNLOW was understood to say that such a Bill had been prepared and would have been introduced but for the pressure of Public Business. It was partly a consolidation Bill and partly an amending Bill. He did not, however, think it desirable to discuss that Bill further now. It had only just been drafted; but the Home Secretary would be very glad between this time and the next Session to give his best consideration to any suggestions from anyone who was interested in the matter.

House adjourned at Five o'clock, to
Tuesday next, a quarter-
past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 30th August, 1887.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee*—Civil Service Estimates; Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments, Vote 35

Resolution [August 29] *reported.*

Public Bills—*Committee*—*Report*—Charity Commissioners (Officers) [362]; Tramways (War Department) [246].

QUESTIONS.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—MULRANNY (CO. MAYO) NATIONAL SCHOOL.

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a portion of the grounds vested in the National Board of Education at Mulranny, County Mayo, has been let by Mr. Stoney, J.P., manager of the Mulranny National School, to certain of his tenants; whether Mr. Stoney has built a house on the school grounds; and, if he could state who receives the rent paid by the tenants referred to?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Commissioner of National Education informed him that they were not aware of there being any grounds for the allegation contained in the Question. If the hon. Gentleman had any information on the subject and would furnish him with the same, he would cause inquiries to be made.

WAR OFFICE — THE MOBILIZATION SCHEME — ALLOCATION OF THE ARTILLERY CORPS.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is proposed in the mobilization scheme to allocate the Regular, Militia, and Volunteer Garrison Artillery to the various fortified works in the country; and, if such is the case, if there is any intention of occasionally exercising these troops, or any portion of them, in the forts or other works it would be their duty to defend?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Yes, Sir; it is proposed to allocate the Regular, Militia, and Volunteer Artillery to the various fortified works. Something is already done in the direction of exercising them in these works, and I hope to be able to do more in future.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—THE TREATY OF COMMERCE WITH SPAIN—AN ARBITRATION CLAUSE.

MR. SAMUELSON (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been drawn to an incident in the Spanish Senate, on the 1st of June, 1887, when a Member asked the Spanish Minister for Foreign Affairs why the Treaty of Commerce between Spain and England did not contain an Arbitration Clause in reference to the "subjects" of that Treaty, and whether a provision to that effect could not be added; to which the Minister replied—

> "That he was favourable to the application of International arbitration to Treaties of Commerce, and would be quite willing to agree to any proposal of the kind;"

and, whether our Government will instruct our Minister at Madrid to enter into communication with the Government of Spain in reference to the matter?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Sir C. Ford has not reported the incident referred to.

EGYPT (FINANCE, &c.)—TAXATION OF FOREIGNERS.

MR. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government intend to renew their proposals concerning the taxation of foreigners in Egypt, according to the plans which were submitted by the Egyptian Government to all the Foreign Powers, and which proposal had at that time received the favourable notice from the then Special Commissioner of the English Government in Egypt?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The policy of Her Majesty's Government is to procure the extension of taxation in Egypt to foreign residents equally with natives. The realization of this endeavour is attended with delay; but the House Tax has now been applied to all foreigners with retrospective effect, and Her Majesty's Government will do all in their power to procure the acceptance of the rest.

THE POLICE (SCOTLAND)—ALLEGED EXCESS OF DUTY—BLANTYRE.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether any complaints have reached him that a policeman entered the house of Henry Banks, Blantyre, on the evening of the 20th instant, "stripped the bed clothes off his body, and spoke roughly to his wife;" and, whether complaints have not reached him of the police having recently exceeded their duty.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): On the night of the 20th, while the police were quelling a disturbance in Blantyre, a quantity of filthy water was thrown upon the police from a house. They went into the house to endeavour to discover who had done this. The man Banks was in bed, with the bed clothes round his head. The police drew down the bed clothes from his head to see if he were asleep, and finding he was really asleep they left the house. Banks was not awakened, and his wife states that there was no incivility or roughness on the part of the police. One complaint has reached me —one of alleged excess by the police in doing their duty by striking a man on the head with a baton—but the doctor who examined the man's head within two days could find no trace of any injury. I may add that very violent usage is being given to the police in Blantyre, and serious injuries being inflicted on them; and that respectable citizens bear witness to the patience and forbearance they have shown, even when seriously assaulted. The senior constable is at present confined to bed, and will be so for a fortnight, from a severe scalp wound inflicted by a poker or crowbar. Just before leaving my Office for the House I received another complaint against the police, and have ordered inquiry to be made.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPHS—ARDMORE, CO. WATERFORD.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) (for Mr. PYNE) (Waterford, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience arising from the want of a telegraph office at Ardmore, County Waterford, the nearest station, Youghal, being eight miles distant; whether, having regard to the fact that the telegraph line from Youghal to Dungarvan runs within three miles of Ardmore, arrangements could be made to establish an office at the latter place; and, whether arrangements could be made for the issue of Post Office Orders at Ardmore?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, no application had reached him for the establishment of a public telegraph office, or for the granting of facilities for the transaction of money order business at Ardmore. If such an application were made to him in writing by the residents of that place he should be glad to give it every attention.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—LORD GRANARD'S ESTATE, CO. LONGFORD.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Lord Granard has served, as alleged, 81 notices of eviction on his Drumlish (County Longford) property; how many evictions have taken place on this estate in the last six years; is it true that those who have been able to go into the Land Court since November, 1886, have got reductions of from 40 to 70 per cent; and, how many Drumlish tenants have received charitable grants to prevent starvation since 1879?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Sixty-six notices of eviction, including seven sub-tenants, have been served on the Drumlish property; 99 evictions, including 21 sub-tenants, have taken place on this estate in the last six years. The average reduction of rent made on the estate by the Land Commissioners since November last has been 50 per cent. So far as the police can ascertain, no Drumlish tenants have received charitable grants to prevent starvation since 1879.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked whether, under the new Act, it would be possible to proceed with these evictions except in cases of eviction on title and of evictions from holdings, the rent of which was over £100 a-year? He also wished to know whether the Government had received a requistion for the police to assist at the eviction of these people, some of whose rents had been reduced 50 per cent?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he had no information as to the facts. He believed the hon. and learned Gentleman was correct as to the state of the law.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, whether the Government would grant police aid in carrying out the evictions under the new Act?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: The Government will give police aid to carry out the law.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT—THE RULES—SECTIONS 1 AND 2.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, How soon the Land Commissioners hope to frame Rules under the new Land Law (Ireland) Act; is it the fact that, under the Leaseholders' Clause, it will be possible for a landlord to refrain at the time of the prescribed application from making any objections to the order breaking a lease, but may afterwards, on the hearing of the fair rent application, after the lease has been set aside, raise any "exclusion" point, so that, if the latter be successful, the tenant will neither have the benefit of the Act nor the protection of his lease; will a rule be framed, prescribing that any legal objections as to grounds of exclusion (such as to sub-letting) existing at the time of the prescribed application, shall only be cognizable if raised before the making of the order determining the lease; and, will the Land Commissioners also consider whether, on the analogy of their adoption of suggestions of the Lords Committee of 1882-3, compelling tenants to give certain notices to the landlord, &c., a Rule could be framed requiring prior notice of legal objections excluding holdings from the Act, and invalidating objections sprung at the hearing without notice having been served?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): The Land Commission forthwith on receiving copy of the Act proceeded to frame Rules under Sections 1 and 2, and they have prepared, sealed, and issued two Rules under Sections 1 and 2. They will consider what further Rules may be necessary. In my view of the Act, the application under Section 1 will never be made unless the tenant intends forthwith to apply for a fair rent. The application mentioned in the first paragraph of Section 1 is only, I think, formal evidence of election on the tenant's part; and the section does not require any formal judicial act determining the lease as a preliminary condition to the fixing of a fair rent. The difficulty suggested by the 2nd paragraph of the Question does not, I think, arise. If the tenant is not entitled to apply, and his application for a fair rent is refused on the ground that his case does not come within the Act, his lease would not be, I think, affected. It is desirable, as far as possible, to lessen costs and avoid the expense and delay of two hearings when one would be sufficient. The Land Commissioners frame Rules on their own authority, and will, no doubt, consider the suggestions made, and take any action they may deem necessary.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, would it not be possible for the landlord to refrain, at the time of the prescribed application, from making any objections to the order breaking a lease, and then afterwards, when the tenant applied for a fair rent, point out a flaw in his title of sub-letting, and thus deprive him of the benefit of the Act?

MR. GIBSON said, as he understood the section, the application need not be followed by a judicial act. In his opinion, the application itself was sufficient. When the tenant made his application to the Court, and then applied to have a fair rent fixed, both matters would be before the Court, and the Court would deal with the whole matter. That was his view of the section; but it did not, of course, bind the Land Commissioners, who were the parties responsible for the framing of these Rules.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, would it be possible to see the Rules before the Vote for the Commissioners was taken?

MR. GIBSON said, he had been furnished with a copy of the Rules by the Land Commissioners, and he should be glad to let the hon. and learned Member see it.

CENTRAL ASIA—AFGHANISTAN—THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN BOUNDARY TREATY.

MR. HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the Ameer of Afghanistan has assented to the settlement of the frontier question by the Treaty recently concluded by Her Majesty's Government with His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Russia?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Yes, Sir; a telegram has been received from the Viceroy of India stating that the Ameer accepts the settlement arrived at.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS — PICCADILLY CIRCUS.

MR. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, as representing the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether it has been decided to build upon the two small triangular open spaces recently added to Piccadilly Circus, and to join the blocks by a superstructure and tunnel for traffic; whether the ratepayers, or any representatives of those upon whom the charge would fall, have been consulted, or are to be consulted, in this matter; whether the cost of devoting these spaces, without further ornamentation, to light and air can be stated; and, what would be the probable cost of erecting there two fountains, independent of any architectural adornments?

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that several schemes applicable to the two triangular open spaces recently added to Piccadilly Circus had been before a Committee of the Metropolitan Board of Works; but no decision had been arrived at. As to the second part of the Question, the members of the Board were the representatives of the ratepayers. On the third and fourth Questions he might say that the value of the site for building purposes had not been reported to the Board. He was not able to give any information as to the approximate cost of erecting two fountains on the open spaces.

NORTH WALES — THE ANTI-TITHE RIOTS—THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSIONER.

MR. BYRON REED (Bradford, E.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has yet received the Report of the Commissioner appointed to inquire into the riots in North Wales; and, when it will be laid upon the Table of the House?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): This Report has been already laid on the Table of the House. It is now in the hands of the printers, who have been instructed to issue it with the least possible delay.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked, when the evidence would be published?

MR. MATTHEWS said, he had not yet received the evidence himself. As soon as he had received it it would be sent to the printers.

TOWNS IMPROVEMENT ACT, 1854—LISTOWEL.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) (for Mr. STACK) (Kerry, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that offences committed against the Towns Improvement Act of 1854 within the township of Listowel are tried at Petty Sessions, thereby depriving the ratepayers of the town of a sum amounting to £150 per annum, to which they are justly entitled; and, whether he will communicate with the Constabulary Authorities, with a view to directing the local police to bring all prosecutions which may be instituted under the Act before the Town Court instead of at Petty Sessions?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet), (who replied) said, owing to the short Notice given of this Question he had not yet had time to receive replies to the inquiries he had made.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY PENSIONS—ROYAL WARRANTS, 1881, 1882.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, by the Royal Warrant relating to Army Pensions, issued July, 1881, the mode of computing pensions of soldiers discharged as non-commissioned officers was so altered that any non-commissioned officer whose service was continuous was entitled to have his years of service, previous to his attaining the age of 18 years, considered in fixing the pension; whether the Addenda Warrant, issued March, 1882, is so framed as to exclude the years of service under the age of 18 years; and, whether, having regard to the hardships inflicted by this Rule, he is prepared to recommend that the 21 years of service should be reckoned from the date of enlistment?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The Rules for calculating service are so framed with regard to boy service as to benefit the soldier either way. The service counts toward pension, except in cases where it is to the soldier's advantage that it should not so count, as occurs in a very few cases of soldiers who enlisted under Warrants of earlier date than 1881.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND) — POSTAL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MACROOM AND CORK.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Postmaster General, If it is a fact that the Cork and Macroom Railway does not carry the mails from any of the stations between Macroom and Cork into Cork; if it is true that the mails from Crookstown are sent into Cork by post car, and thereby get late for the night mail from Cork to Dublin; whether an arrangement will be made with the Macroom Railway Company to carry all mails from all stations by an evening train, to arrive in Cork in time for special bags to catch the Dublin night mail; also for a day service in connection with the Dublin 12 o'clock mail; and, whether this service could be so arranged that traders and others in the district referred to might be enabled to save one, if not two, mails?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The Cork and Macroom Railway is used for the conveyance of the day mail to and from Macroom and other places; but the night mail is still conveyed by car. I am not aware that there have been failures of the bags from Crookstown; but I will have inquiry made on this point. I will also inquire whether use can be made of the railway for the night mail, and whether any improvement of the day mail is practicable.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES) — CORK MILITIA ARTILLERY—PAUCITY OF OFFICERS.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the number of commissioned officers in the Brigade of Militia Artillery (lately known as the West Cork Artillery); how many of these officers are residents in the County of Cork; and, whether he has any information as to the cause of the paucity of commissioned officers?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter) (who replied) said: There are seven commissioned officers besides the adjutant and quartermaster, of whom three reside in the County of Cork, and three in other parts of Ireland. The difficulty in obtaining officers for the Irish Militia is probably largely due to the impoverishment of the class from which officers were formerly drawn. The difficulty is everywhere increased, as regards the Artillery and Militia, by the fact that the advantages to those who enter the Line from the Militia are less than in the case of the Infantry.

ADMIRALTY—THE FLYING SQUADRON —H.M.S. "REVENGE."

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether H.M.S. *Revenge* has been ordered to join the Flying Squadron; whether the vessel has been lately overhauled and examined as to her seaworthiness; if not, what was the date of the last examination; when was her copper last cleansed; and, when and to where did she make her last sea voyage?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing), in reply, said, that there was no longer a Flying Squadron, and that Her Majesty's ship *Revenge* had, therefore, not been ordered to join it. The *Revenge* was a stationary receiving ship, and had been utilized for that purpose for the last 12 years.

DR. TANNER: Is it a fact that when the copper of this ship was last cleansed two basketsful of oysters were taken from it?

[No reply.]

PROSECUTION EXPENSES ACT — EXPENSES OF WITNESSES IN CRIMINAL CASES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether it is legally within the discretion of the Treasury to repay the expenses of witnesses which, in accordance with 29 & 30 *Vict.* c. 52, have been allowed, when the charge has been dismissed by the examining magistrate?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): It is not strictly correct to say there is no legal discretion on the part of the Treasury. If the certificate has duly been given under 29 & 30 *Vict.* c. 52, the witness is entitled to his expenses, whether the charge is dismissed or not.

MR. JAMES STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) asked Mr. Attorney General, What is the course of proceeding when the Court allows the expenses of a witness in a criminal case; whether the money is paid over to the officer of the Court; and, if so, whether it is returned to the Treasury in the event of a witness not applying; and, whether there is any limit of time, and, if so what, within which application for his expenses must be made by a witness?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): The practice, under the circumstances mentioned in the Question of the hon. Member, is for the officer of the Court to pay to the witnesses their expenses in a case in which it is authorized by Statute. These expenses are, in the first instance, paid out of the local funds. The Treasury, on receiving a certificate from the Clerk of the Peace or other officer of the Court that certain moneys have been paid, and on the production of the vouchers signed by the witnesses, repays the amounts so paid to the Local Authorities; so that the Treasury has a double safeguard, the certificate by the Local Authority and the voucher, or receipt, sent by the witness. There is is no statutory limit of time; but inasmuch as the officer of the Court closes his accounts at the end of each Session or Assize, as the case may be, if the witness does not apply for payment before the accounts are sent in he does not get his expenses allowed.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES—OPPOSITION AT OSTEND.

SIR EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Ramsgate smacks *Pride of the Ocean*, *Sarah and Edward*, *Dart*, and *Rialto*, attempted to enter Ostend Harbour on Friday last with the view of landing cargoes of fresh fish, and were unable to do so on account of the hostile attitude of the Ostend fishermen; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will at once call the attention of the Belgian Government to the matter, and obtain similar privileges and security for English fishermen at Belgian ports for sale of fish, as Belgian fishermen have at English ports?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government are aware that several vessels have been unable to land and sell their fish at Ostend; but the cases of the four vessels mentioned have not been specially reported. The attention of the Belgian Government has been called to these occurrences; and the Belgian Minister for Foreign Affairs gave Her Majesty's Minister the most positive assurance that every measure would be taken to protect British fishermen in what the Belgian Government admitted to be their undoubted right to land and sell their fish in Belgian ports, and the Authorities appear to have acted with energy and firmness. But the Belgian Government state that they are unable to protect them from Boycotting; and Her Majesty's Government are informed that since the attack on the British boats no one could be found to discharge or buy the fish. Her Majesty's Consul General at Antwerp has been directed by telegraph to proceed to Ostend in order to report upon the circumstances or assist the Vice Consul, if necessary.

COAL MINES—THE COLLIERY ACCIDENT AT UDSTON, LANARKSHIRE—THE "GAUZE SAFETY LAMP."

MR. BURT (Morpeth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has noticed that Mr. Dickinson, Inspector of Mines, and Mr. Maconochie, advocate, in their recently published Report of the inquiry into the Udston Colliery explosion, strongly condemn the Scotch "gauze safety lamp," stating "that it does not satisfy the conditions met with in such a mine as the Udston;" and, whether, as this same lamp is declared in the Report of the Royal Commission on accidents in mines to be one that "can scarcely be regarded as a safety lamp at all," he will take steps to call the attention of colliery owners to the unreliability of the said lamp, which is largely used in the mines of Scotland?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes; I have seen the statement in question. A year ago I issued a Circular calling the attention of mineowners to the recommendations of the Commissioners, and to the necessity of a safety lamp being so constructed that it might be safely carried against any inflammable air current likely to be met with. I am consulting the Inspector of the district whether there is any necessity for issuing a further special Circular.

EMIGRATION FROM IRELAND—THE WESTPORT EMIGRATION COMMITTEE—ACCOUNTS OF MR. STONEY.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the total sum furnished to Mr. Stoney, of Rosturk, County Mayo, by the Local Government Board for emigration purposes; whether Mr. Stoney has rendered a full and detailed account of the expenditure of the money to the Local Government Board; and, whether he will lay a copy of Mr. Stoney's Statement upon the Table of the House?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The total sum granted by the Local Government Board was £1,446 13*s.* 2*d.* Mr. Stoney, on behalf of the Committee, has furnished to the Local Government Board a detailed account of the expenditure, supported by vouchers. The proceedings of the Emigration Committee with respect to the persons sent out have, as the hon. Member doubtless is aware, been recently the subject of an inquiry. The matter being still under consideration, the Government cannot at present undertake to lay any Papers on the subject upon the Table of the House.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): The right hon. and gallant Gentleman says the matter is still under consideration. I would ask him under whose consideration?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Under the consideration of the Local Government Board.

MR. DILLON: If we are going to discuss the Vote for the Local Government Board, ought we not to have the Report before the House?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I presume the hon. Gentleman would hardly wish to have the Report before it is complete?

MR. DILLON: When will it be completed?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: It is impossible to say.

IRELAND—BREEDING OF HORSES—THOROUGHBRED SIRES, WINNERS OF ROYAL PLATES.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what principle the thoroughbred sires, winners of the prizes to be voted by this House, have been, or are to be, distributed through the country; whether regard will be had to the fact that, from various circumstances, no thoroughbred sires are kept in a county by private individuals; whether he is aware that in the County of Leitrim there is much need for the improvement of the breed of horses, owing to the fact that generally there are no good sires in the county; and, whether, if such an arrangement has not been already made, steps will be taken to have one of the prize winners placed at the disposal of the tenant farmers of Leitrim, without having such a distance to travel into other counties (already well provided in this respect) as to render the advantage of very little value?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: Details of this character have been properly left in the hands of the Royal Dublin Society, who will administer the Vote, and who, it cannot be doubted, have endeavoured to make the best possible arrangements for the general benefit and convenience. The society has published a programme which shows that the County of Leitrim forms part of two districts, of one of which Ballymote, in the adjoining County of Sligo, is the headquarters, and Longford the headquarters of the other.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked, if there was any objection to lay the Report on this subject on the Table of the House?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he thought there would be no objection.

MR. HAYDEN asked, was the right hon. and gallant Gentleman aware that neither Ballymote nor Longford was sufficiently near for Leitrim?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he he had only just seen the programme himself; but he must say that the distance did not appear to him to be conveniently arranged. He had that afternoon written to the Secretary of the Royal Dublin Society for further information regarding the Local Committees and other subjects; and he hoped to be able to give the House that further information before very long.

MR. COX (Clare, E.) asked, if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would furnish the House with the names of the members of the Local Committees?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN replied, that he had just stated that he had written to the Secretary of the Royal Dublin Society for any information which that gentleman could give him on the question of Local Committees; and when he had received it he would be happy to communicate it to the House.

WALES — GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS IN THE WELSH LANGUAGE —THE TITHE INQUIRY REPORT.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether the Local Government Board, the Registrar General's Office, the Board of Inland Revenue, and the Privy Council have, from time to time, issued publications in the Welsh language; and, whether, on reconsideration, he will direct the publication of a Welsh translation of Mr. Bridge's Tithe Inquiry Report?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have made inquiry of the Offices named, and it appears that, occasionally, short Circulars and formal notices are issued by them in Welsh. This does not seem to me to constitute a precedent for translating into Welsh a lengthy Report of a Government Commission. I am still of opinion that any demand for a Welsh translation will be best met by private enterprise.

WALES — THE TITHE AGITATION— ATTACK ON CANON BROWNE'S RESIDENCE AT BODFAIR.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether there is any reason for connecting the perpetration of the outrage upon Canon Browne's residence at Bodfair with the fact that he gave evidence before Mr. Bridge's Tithe Inquiry?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The information I have received does not connect this outrage with the fact that the reverend gentleman gave evidence before Mr. Bridge. I have asked the Chief Constable the question; but have not as yet received his reply.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) —ASSISTANT REVISING BARRISTERS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, What course the Government intend to take this year as to the appointment of Assistant Revising Barristers; is it intended to follow the precedents of the appointments in 1886 by the Liberals and 1885 by the Conservatives; what are the names of the Barristers who served in 1886 and 1885 who are not to be asked to serve again; and, what new men are to replace them?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): It is intended to appoint Revising Barristers this year; but not so many will be required as last year. The arrangements are not yet complete, and I cannot answer the last paragraph of the hon. and learned Gentleman's Question; but the appointments will, no doubt, be governed by the same principles as hitherto.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman, whether all the arrangements in the case of last year were not announced and practically made known before the present date—I believe by the 1st of August?

MR. GIBSON: The hon. and learned Member is right as regards last year; but in 1885 the arrangements were not made till some time in September. Last year when the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) quitted Office the arrangements were a little accelerated.

MR. T. M. HEALY asked, whether certain barristers who acted in 1885 and 1886 were not to be asked to serve again?

MR. GIBSON: All the answer I can give the hon. and learned Gentleman is that the arrangements are not completed.

EVICTIONS (SCOTLAND)—THE BROXBURNE SHALE OIL COMPANY.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If anything can be done to avert the eviction of 800 miners by the Broxburne Shale Oil Company, on Saturday next, as stated in the Scotch newspapers?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): All I know of this matter is derived from a very lengthy telegram put into my hands as I entered the House this afternoon. It appears from it that only 121 summonses—not 800—were taken out. Of these, five were withdrawn; in 33 instances the parties removed after services of the summonses, and before the Court day; 73 were ordered to be removed on the 1st September; and, in consequence of medical certificates, five were allowed to remain until the 8th September, and five until the 24th September. These are all the facts I have got about the matter. It appears that these evictions are in consequence of a strike or trade dispute, in which, I am afraid, the Government cannot usefully or profitably interfere.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—LOCKERS.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding) asked the First Commissioner of Works, If he will give instructions that the inconvenience to which Members are put, for whom no lockers are provided in the House, shall be remedied during the Recess?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): Orders were given some time ago for the provision of lockers; and I hope they will be finished many a long day before this House assembles again.

HORSE BREEDING IN GREAT BRITAIN.

MR. MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he can give the House any information as to the distribution of the £5,000 to be devoted to the encouragement of the breed of horses in Great Britain; how much of the said sum is to be given to Scotland, and what proportion to blood horses and those employed in agriculture; and, who will administer the fund in England and Scotland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The scheme to which the hon. Member's Question refers has not yet reached a stage at which I can give him the particulars he asks for. What has happened is that Her Majesty has been pleased to promise that the sum at present given by her for the encouragement of horse-racing should with the exception of the cost of the Ascot Cup, the Curragh Whip, and some Colonial Plates, be diverted to the encouragement of horse-breeding. The Government will make up the £3,000 odd thus obtained to £5,000, upon the constitution of a Board, of which the Master of the Horse will be a member, to administer the fund. The composition of this Board is not yet decided upon; but it is proposed that it should include representatives of the Royal Agricultural Society and the Highland Society. The representation of the latter will, I hope, reassure the hon. Gentleman that Scotland will be duly considered.

INDIAN TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—THE CORRESPONDENCE.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether the Correspondence respecting the Indian Telegraph Department is still incomplete; and, whether he will take steps to have it laid before the House before the day fixed for the discussion of the Indian Budget?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I am requested by the Under Secretary of State for India to answer this Question. The correspondence regarding the re-organization of the Indian Telegraph Department is complete, so far as the Secretary of State is concerned; but as the Secretary of State's final despatch is not yet in the hands of the Government of India, it would be premature to present the Papers to Parliament until the Government of India is in possession of the Secretary of State's decision.

THE POLICE (METROPOLIS)—CASE OF MISS CASS—MR. NEWTON, POLICE MAGISTRATE.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When he intends to communicate to the House the decision of the Lord Chancellor in respect of Mr. Newton, the Police Magistrate?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have already informed the House that the Lord Chancellor's decision cannot be communicated to the House as long as the criminal proceedings arising out of the recent inquiry are still pending.

CENSUS (METROPOLIS)—THE WORKING CLASS POPULATION.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he will arrange to have the Returns of the Census, recently taken of the Working Class Population of five typical London parishes, placed in the hands of hon. Members before the close of the Session?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's), in reply, said, he had no doubt the Return would be in the hands of Members before the House rose.

THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC—BOUNTY ON EXPORT OF MEAT.

MR. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey) asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the information supplied by *The Standard* newspaper, in its issue of 23rd August, is correct—that a measure has been laid before the Congress, by the President of the Argentine Republic and Minister Pacheco, providing that a bounty of $20 for every ton of beef exported, and a bounty of $6 for every ton of mutton exported, and a bounty of $3 each on cattle exported alive, is to be paid. In the event, which appears certain, that such measure will pass into law; and, whether, having regard to the conditions necessary to maintain our meat supply, he will consider the advisability to communicate with the Government of the Argentine Republic upon the question?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Board of Trade have no official information upon the subject referred to by the hon. Member; but they will communicate with the Foreign Office on the matter.

THE CONSOLIDATED FUND—PAYMENT OF PENSIONS, &c.—THE MASTER OF THE HAWKS.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Who is the official specially responsible for the due payment of pensions and other expenses charged upon the Consolidated Fund; when the total expenditure of £1,373 11*s.* 5*d.*, in connection with the duties of the Master of the Hawks, was reduced to £965, and under what circumstances; whether the original salary of £391 payable to the Master of the Hawks was at that time increased or reduced, and what is the present amount of his actual salary; what are the other payments which go to make up the present annual charge of £965; whether all these other payments, including the wages of keepers who are not appointed and the allowance for food of hawks which are not kept, have for some time past been paid over to the Master of the Hawks, in addition to his own salary; and, if so, for how long; and, whether, before making such payment during the past year, the Treasury took steps to satisfy itself that these additional payments were still a valid charge upon the Consolidated Fund, and could legally be claimed for his own use by the Master of the Hawks?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The charges upon the Consolidated Fund are paid upon a quarterly Schedule prepared by the Treasury, and for which the Treasury are responsible. I have endeavoured to ascertain when the reduction took place, and I find that the Committee of the House of Commons on the Civil List of King William IV., and which reported in October, 1831, state that the charge was £1,373 11*s.* 5*d.*, and the salary £391 1*s.* 5*d.* Shortly afterwards a Warrant of the Treasury, dated September, 1833, directed that the sum of £965 should be paid in respect of this charge from the land revenues of the Crown until further directions—that sum, I understand, representing the net sum previously received by the Master of the Hawks after payment of certain fees and duties. In the Warrant ordering payment of the sum of £965 there is no reference to the salary as apart from the other charges. These payments have been made, as far as our knowledge goes, from the time of the original grant in the Reign of James II. Opinions of the Law Officers of the Crown have been taken on three separate occasions, the latest being so recent as 1875. These opinions satisfy the Treasury that they are legally bound to pay these sums, and the Treasury, therefore, yearly discharge their legal obligations.

MR. HANBURY: Do I understand that there is no alteration in the salary, and that it is still £391?

MR. JACKSON: I have endeavoured to give the information to the hon. Gentleman as far as I could. The Treasury Warrant makes no reference to salary in distinction to other charges; but simply directs the Treasury from date to pay a sum of £965 annually.

MR. HANBURY: Up to that date the salary payable was £391.

MR. JACKSON: No, Sir; up to that date the sum payable was £1,373 11*s.* 5*d.*

MR. HANBURY: But did not the hon. Member himself mention £391 as the amount of the salary?

MR. JACKSON: Yes; it had been stated to be £391.

INDIA—THE REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMISSION.

MR. BUCHANAN (Edinburgh, W.) (for Mr. MUNRO-FERGUSON) (Leith, &c.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, If it has yet been decided whether the Report of the Finance Commission shall be made public, or not; and, whether the Government of India intends to take any action on that Report?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: I am asked to state that the recommendations of the Finance Commission are under the consideration of the Government of India, with a view to early action; and the Secretary of State is of opinion that, for the present, they must be treated as confidential. As soon as the proposals of the Government of India are received, his Lordship will consider what steps can be taken to publish the Report.

PUBLIC HEALTH (METROPOLIS)—OUTBREAK OF SCARLET FEVER.

MR. BONSOR (Surrey, Wimbledon) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the increase of scarlet fever in the Metropolis; and, whether an investigation has been made by his Department as to the primary causes; and, if so, whether they are similar to those which produced the recent epidemic at Wimbledon and Hendon?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): There has been a large increase in the number of admissions of scarlet fever patients to the hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board. On the 25th of this month there were in these hospitals 749 patients suffering from scarlet fever. Last year the number of patients on the 26th of August was 336, and there was a continuous increase until the 1st of December, when the number was 618. The recent increase in the number of admissions, no doubt, leads to the inference that there is an increase in the number of scarlet fever cases in the Metropolis; but it is satisfactory to state that the mortality from this disease, as shown by the Registrar General's Returns, has been below the average. The prevalence of the disease is general throughout London, there being only three out of the 30 unions and parishes in the Metropolis from which cases have not been received into the hospitals. The question as to the influence which disease in milch cows may exercise as a starting point for epidemics of scarlet fever is recognized by the Board as a subject for investigation, when the circumstances connected with an outbreak are such as to suggest than an investigation may be pursued under conditions which favour the ascertaining of the facts. The widespread prevalence of the disease in the Metropolis, however, does not afford facilities for such an investigation.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—LOCAL AUTHORITIES (EXPENSES) BILL.

MR. BONSOR (Surrey, Wimbledon) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he intends to proceed this Session with the Local Authorities (Expenses) Bill; and, if so, whether he will amend it, so as to exclude the possibility of sanitary inquiries by the Medical Officers of the Board falling on Local Authorities?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It is my intention to proceed this Session with the Local Authorities (Expenses) Bill. I shall be quite willing to insert words in Committee which will make it clear that it is not intended that sanitary inquiries by Medical Inspectors of the Board should come within the provisions of the Bill.

THE IMPERIAL DEFENCES—BERMUDA AND HALIFAX.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN (Hythe) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Treasury still object to connect the great fortresses, torpedo station, and military and naval establishments of Bermuda with the fortress of Halifax, Nova Scotia, by a submarine cable; whether he has considered that, as the distance is only 750 miles, the expense would be small, and that the annual interest on outlay, if the capital be raised in 99 years Terminable Annuities at 3¼ cent would be only £3,500, against which receipts for commercial messages would accrue; whether the Governor of Bermuda has long urged the necessity of laying such a cable; whether the War Office and the Admiralty do not entirely concur with the Governor; and, if he could state for what reasons the Government decline to have the cable laid?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Treasury do not object to connect by submarine cable the places named in the Question of the hon. Baronet. Tenders were invited last year for laying and maintaining a cable; but none of the tenders were accepted, the cost and conditions not being considered satisfactory. The cost would be largely in excess of the amount named in the Question; and the Treasury would not favourably entertain capital being raised on 99 years' Annuities for such a purpose as submarine cables. The War Office and Admiralty think it would be desirable to have some communication with Bermuda.

THE REVENUE—REVIEW OF TAXATION.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government will, during the Recess, take into consideration the desirability of reviewing the system of direct taxation now existing, with the view of adopting a graduating scale, or some other mode by which the working classes shall be relieved from the payment of an undue percentage of taxation?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I have no hesitation in saying that it is the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government to review the system of taxation before the Budget of the year is introduced; but I am not able to accept the statement of the hon. Gentleman with reference to the existing incidence of taxation as a statement of fact, because I am not aware that it is supported by any positive evidence.

WATER SUPPLY (METROPOLIS)—THE WEST HAM DISTRICT.

Major BANES (West Ham, S.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the continued want of a supply of water in West Ham and district, and to the fact that from 7 p.m. on Friday to 6 a.m. on Sunday last not a drop could be obtained in the neighbourhood of West Ham Park and Plaistow; and, whether, considering that according to the Press the fever epidemic is assuming alarming proportions, some steps can be taken to compel the East London Water Company to remedy this state of things?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Board are assured by the East London Waterworks Company that there is a copious supply of water daily to the locality referred to in the Question. It is stated that only one short street, called Park Road, was supplied insufficiently during the hours named, and this was in consequence of the turncock not having opened sufficiently the valve in the particular main. Immediately the complaint was received by the Company the cause was investigated, ascertained, and remedied. The Board believe, however, that there is no doubt that, in consequence of the long prevalence of the drought, the Company have, with the view of preventing waste of water, cut off the supply each night for a certain number of hours, usually between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES—OUTRAGES BY BELGIAN ON ENGLISH FISHING VESSELS.

Sir EDWARD BIRKBECK (Norfolk, E.) asked, Whether the First Lord of the Admiralty could confirm the statement made in the House on Friday last by the Secretary to the Board of Trade — namely, that the force of cruisers in the North Sea would be increased to five steamers and four sailing cruisers; and, if so, whether he was in a position to state that the cruisers in question had been despatched to the fishing grounds, and were prepared to protect and defend English fishing vessels from an expected attack by foreign fishermen?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing), in reply, said, if the information given by the Secretary to the Board of Trade was derived from the Admiralty it was, no doubt, correct. He believed that the total number of vessels detailed for the duty referred to was nine, five of which were steamers, and four sailing vessels. The Admiral Superintendent of Reserves would to-morrow inspect some of the cruisers to be despatched to the fishing ground, and later on other vessels would follow. It would not be possible always to keep nine vessels there, as it would be necessary for them occasionally to return for fresh water and coal. The Government were most anxious to give adequate protection to the fishing interests concerned; and if they found either from the area of ground to be patrolled or for other reason, that they were unable to sufficiently perform this duty they would have to see what other measures would have to be adopted.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—THE EVICTIONS AT HERBERTSTOWN, CO. LIMERICK.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that a large force of military and police are engaged to-day evicting the tenants of The O'Grady at Herbertstown, County Limerick, and how he reconciles this fact with the statement that no evictions will now take place in Ireland for some months?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.), in reply, said, he was not aware of the fact which the hon. Gentleman alleged; but there could be no doubt, he believed, as to the interpretation of the Act. There could, of course, be evictions of tenants of over £100 a-year rent, and there could be evictions on titles; but, as the hon. Gentleman knew, it was impossible under the Land Law (Ireland) Act to evict in other classes than those two classes of tenants.

Mr. DILLON said, his information was that the evictions were going on at the present moment, and that the last telegrams were of a rather serious nature.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, he was afraid he had no information to give the hon. Gentleman; but it appeared to him that if the hon. Gentleman represented the facts accurately the people concerned were acting illegally.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—THE ATTACK ON THE NATIONAL FORESTERS AT PORTRUSH.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, If yesterday, at the Portrush Petty Sessions, the magistrates sentenced eight persons charged with attacking the National Foresters to terms of imprisonment varying from three to six months; whether the magistrates exonerated the Foresters from blame; and whether any witnesses adverse to the Foresters were committed for perjury?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): No, Sir; I am not aware. I have had no information from Portrush on the subject.

Mr. SEXTON expressed the hope that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would obtain necessary information before the Vote for the Chief Secretary's salary was taken.

CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES—THE FISHERY DISPUTES.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): As I have been repeatedly questioned with reference to the North American fishery disputes, perhaps the House will allow me to state that the United States Government have agreed to the appointment of a new Fisheries Commission of three members on each side. I may add that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain) has accepted the office of principal Commissioner.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): May I ask whether the powers of the Commissioners will be wide enough to include other matters requiring adjustment between this country and the United States; or whether they will be strictly limited to disputes arising out of the fisheries question?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: I clearly intended to imply that the Commission will have reference to the disputed points between the United States and this country with respect to the Canadian Fisheries.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON: Solely?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: Yes, Sir; so far as I know.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,978, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries of the Officers and Attendants of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and other Expenses."

Mr. MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I wish, Mr. Courtney, to enter my protest against this Vote, inasmuch as I believe it to be a wasteful and a profligate, and even a wicked, expenditure of public money. In the first place, in reference to the salaries of the Viceregal Household, I see that there are 17 gentlemen who are supported at a yearly expense of £3,875. Now, we have heard a great deal of late of the sacred law of contract. I should be very glad if these offices were put up to public competition, for I am sure that in that case they could all be filled and their duties discharged, not at an annual expense of £3,875, but at an annual expenditure of £200, with quite as much benefit to the nation. Indeed, the services of these 17 gentlemen would not be worth £200 a-year. First of all, we come to the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant and the secretary's office, which costs £829 8*s.*; but we are not told how much the clerk gets and how much the private secretary, though I am strongly inclined to believe that the private secretary gets the lion's share. In investigating the details of this Castle Establishment, we cannot complain too much. All Castle officials, from age to age, have been afflicted with what Juvenal calls the *cacoëthes scribendi.* There are secretaries and secretaries. There is the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who is himself the responsible Government of Ireland, and there is an Under Secretary, an Assistant Under Secretary, and a Parliamentary Secretary, and what with one and another the amount of stationery consumed among them must be something enormous. Then, in addition to all these, the Lord Lieutenant has this private secretary. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) what are the duties of the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant? Are they the simple duties that would be discharged by a private secretary who might hold that position to a country gentleman, or even to a public man? One would imagine that a nobleman of large fortune, drawing £20,000 a-year from his official position, would be able to afford to keep a private secretary himself, if he wanted one, especially as he has in all 23 other secretaries. I will suggest what the duties are. I can only conceive them to be to revise the Lord Lieutenant's speeches and supply them to the Press; and, if that be so, all I can say is that this private secretary is the best paid man for literary labour in the whole universe. I hope and trust it will not be considered another exhibition of Disraeli's *Calamities of Authors* that a private secretary should get for literary work upon the Lord Lieutenant's speeches £829 per annum. Then we come to the *aides-de-camp*, who, four in number, get £200 a-year each. Of them I say nothing, for I do not know what their duties are, though I have seen them in processions. Next we come to an important official, the State steward, who is very well paid at £505 19*s.* 4*d.* per annum. We laugh at these things; but we and our constituents, to whom every penny is of importance, have to pay the piper. The State steward, as I have said, has £505 19*s.* 4*d.* a-year. I do not know what his duties are, and if I am wrong, no doubt, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), whom I see opposite, and who is intimately acquainted with the details of Viceregal administration, will correct me, but I understand the duties of the State steward are to introduce partners at the Viceregal dances to each other, and to assist in arranging at dinner parties what gentleman shall bring in what lady, the precedence being given by the Ulster King-at-Arms. Next we come to the Comptroller of the Household. He is paid £413 13*s.* 4*d.* per annum, and his duties are—I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is paying attention, because I hope he will be able to rebut these slanders if they be slanders—his duties are simply to pay the servants under him, and to discharge and dismiss them. I challenge contradiction upon that. Was ever a person so well paid for such work? Then I come to a gentleman whose duties I do not know, and, although I have very fair powers of invention and imagination—at least, so I flatter myself—I really cannot imagine what are the duties of the table-man, or of the Master of the Horse, or of the gentleman in waiting, unless it be to lounge about; or of the State Marshal, except it be to appear in a powdered wig; or of the riding master—indeed, there is none there. Then we come to a profligate and wicked expenditure. There is set down a telegraphist at 5*s.* a-day. We know that there are 365 days in a year, and for every one of them the Viceregal telegraphist receives 5*s.* But the Lord Lieutenant does not occupy the Viceregal Lodge for more than four months in the year, so that for the greater part of the year this telegraphist is there doing nothing, having no duties to discharge at all at the Viceregal Lodge. Here you have an official resident at the Lodge kept up at the public expense, and practically doing nothing the greater part of his time. This is a small item, no doubt, and probably may be enjoyed by some faithful retainer; but it shows the reckless and lavish expenditure which is carried on. Then there is the sergeant of the household, who gets £100 a-year—a moderate item, but it is very well known that he is well paid for his work. There are many people in Dublin who would be very glad to have his official position, connected as it is with the Viceregal Lodge—there would be quite a competition among the sergeants in Dublin if it were thrown open. Thus we have £,3,875 for these 17 officials. If I paid down £200 a-year I think I could get some change for my money, and yet have the work a great deal better done by two or three men, who could do it more properly than it is done at present. This is a kind of picturesque Hogarth's *Rake's Progress* in expenditure. We come now to the supply of the spiritual wants of the Lord Lieutenant, and we find that they cost the nation £789. I would not say anything about this if the Viceregal Household attended the Chapel Royal; but it is notorious that they do not attend it, and that the whole of this sum of £789 is paid for keeping up a service which is not regularly attended. The Viceregal party go to other places of worship. This sum is simply a relic of a bad old time. There was possibly at one time a real occasion for having a Viceregal service in the Chapel Royal in Dublin Castle. That was during the establishment of the Irish Church, when there were certain Viceregal chaplains who used to come up and preach as competitors for bishoprics, and the Lord Lieutenant used to inspect them, as the Chief Secretary might inspect a batch of Resident Magistrates. But that time has now passed away. I will now analyze the expenditure under this head. The Viceregal party are now impervious to these spiritual benefits so far as they relate to Dublin Castle, and, under the circumstances, I do not much blame them. The chaplain at the Castle has £184 12*s.* 8*d.*, but that is supplemented by a sum of £150 in lieu of a furnished house. That discloses as neat a "job" as has been seen in Viceregal affairs since the time of the Union. The chaplain would not consent to be much called a mere chaplain. He is a high, mighty, and dignified official, the Dean of the Chapel Royal, with all the paraphernalia of his exalted office. But Dean Dickenson has a very comfortable living in which he lives; and therefore this sum is given him in lieu of a house, because he does not want two houses—the Viceregal residence, which he does not want, he is practically allowed to let. In addition to this, the dean is not always present in the Castle Chapel. He has to attend to the duties of his parish, and probably he is a very excellent parochial clergyman. Then there is a reading clerk, who gets £41 10*s.* per annum. Here, again, is a result of the old system of expenditure. The service in the Castle Chapel is now choral, so that there is no necessity for a reading clerk at all; and he is never there. This is an instance of development. In former times the Viceregal Chapel was a small and dingy apartment; but now it is a magnificent affair, with a service which is fully choral. They have got up a choir, and there is no necessity for a reading clerk with a salary of £41 10*s*. Then we come to the provisions for the singing in the Viceregal Chapel, which cost a good deal more, for there are a certain number of choiristers, and the cost of the singing comes to over £300 a-year. All this for a chapel which is not attended by the public at large, for the reason that in the City of Dublin there are three very admirable trained choirs —one at Trinity College, one at Christ Church, and one at St. Patrick's Cathedral. The Viceregal party usually attend the service at St. Patrick's Cathedral. You, therefore, have in Dublin, outside the Castle, three trained choirs with admirable choral services for those who desire them. Then there is the keeper of the chapel at £98 a-year. I do not say anything against that charge. The chapel is one of the most beautiful of buildings, and the keeper shows you over it in a manner which does him infinite credit. The keeper is the only one whose assistance, if I could help it, I would retain, for, as I have contended, the chapel is not used by the Viceregal party. We must remember that Dublin Castle is about the dingiest place in the world—that no person who could avoid it would care to be in it for more than five minutes. The vulgar stamp of a gingerbread crown is very marked upon it. The Viceregal party are only there during what is called "the Dublin season," which lasts from February to March. The Dublin season begins about the 1st of February, and winds up with what is called "the sweep's bale" in March. They are in the Viceregal Lodge during that time, and they go to church at the Hibernian Military School, or, when they choose, as on last Sunday, to St. Patrick's Cathedral. I saw in the Dublin evening papers yesterday that the Viceregal party were at St. Patrick's on Sunday, and an accident, not of a very serious nature, occurred as they were coming home, not from the Chapel Royal, which costs £789 per annum, but from St. Patrick's Cathedral. This clerical establishment, therefore, is kept up from pure wantonness. The Lord Lieutenant, Sir, is rich in spiritual advisers. He has 40 private chaplains, save one. He has 39 private chaplains altogether, and every one of these gentlemen is bound to preach once at least in the year in the Chapel Royal. They are each bound to preach possibly two, but at least one sermon a-year before the Viceregal presence. The appointments are purely honorary, and the chaplains could preach in the chapel without the expense of the Dean and choiristers and all this paraphernalia. I now come from the chapel to the ceremonial of this sham and gingerbread Court. First, we have the Ulster King-at-Arms. As I am in a very humble capacity subject to "philosophic doubt" and an inquirer after truth, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland will tell me what Sir Bernhard Burke does as Ulster King-at-Arms? I do not know what he does myself, except that he possibly directs the ceremonials. But there is another thing which I believe is part of his duty—he is a "universal provider" of cheap aristocracy—a sort of Whiteley of Dublin Castle. I remember, many years ago, reading, in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a description of a little slave girl called Topsy, who said, when she was asked who were her parents, that she did not know she ever had any—"she 'spected she growed." I feel sure that if she had gone to Sir Bernard Burke, in a couple of hours he would have shown that she had "all the blood of all the Howards" in her veins. Is it not very hard that we should have to pay for all this nonsense to supply other people with pedigrees? I come now to an official the name of whose office I do not pretend to be able to pronounce. This gentleman is the Pursuivant-at-Arms. Then comes one of the most absurd things in the whole list—a boy who plays the drum has an allowance for clothing, for one kettle-drum, amounting to £12 6*s*. What is the kettle-drum in this case? Is it a kettle-drum that one beats, or is it an afternoon tea? Will the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary tell us what it is? This boy must be a person of some importance for the maintenance of the Union between the two countries. Then I come to a messenger whose income commences at £52, but rises by yearly increments to £78. That amount—£78 a-year—is fever height for subordinate officials. Then comes an official, who is, I think, unfairly dealt with. He is the office-keeper, and he only gets £30 a-year. Sir Bernard Burke gets £750 and expenses for providing pretentious people with pedigrees. When people in London want pedigrees they do not go to the office of Heralds, but to Jew's shops, and buy up old portraits. But we go to more expense in Dublin, and it costs us £1,091 per annum. There is something more still. Among the incidental expenses of the Office-at-Arms, there is £40 put down for the insignia of the Order of St. Patrick, and £20 for emblazoning arms. What is the meaning of this charge for the insignia of the Order of St. Patrick? A nobleman—and they are all noblemen who get this order, and not new nobility either—would be quite able, and, I should think, willing, to pay for the insignia and banners of his own order. Still they always seem to have this item for insignia and banner just the same every year, with a very marvellous uniformity. Then there is this charge of £20 for emblazoning arms. But the arms are not emblazoned. I have seen them recently, and they consist of wooden helmets and wooden swords, and are to be seen in St. Patrick's Cathedral, at least for such of the Peers as were made knights before the Disestablishment of the Church. Since then—and I am glad that my Church is now saved from that great profanation—since the Disestablishment of the Church the investiture takes place in Dublin Castle, and the residue of the banners are there. I do not know what they do with them there, nor am I likely to know; but I do know them in St. Patrick's Cathedral, and a more dingy and dirty lot you could not well see anywhere. Why should the people of Ireland pay for the insignia of the Order of St. Patrick? I know something about the Order, and I say there is no historical sentiment connected with it—there is nothing high-minded about it. This Order of St. Patrick was founded at a recent date, so lately as 1783, by Lord Buckhurst, who was then Lord Lieutenant, and it was always hated and despised by the Irish people. The peer who founded it is believed to have founded it for corruption, and the charge could not be rebutted in the Irish House of Parliament that he sold peerages and appropriated the money to buy Votes in the House of Commons. He founded the Order for which a starving people have to pay, while these gentlemen who have the insignia are well able to pay for the amusement themselves, if they like it. I have now gone through this expenditure, but I have left alone such items as seem to me to have a tendency to do good to the people. Nearly the whole of the expenditure, so far as the people are concerned, is useless, and worse than useless, and I would rather take the money and throw it into the Liffey than have it appropriated in this way. Sometimes the Irish Representatives use words that possibly in their cooler moments they would not justify, but we are now advisedly attacking a system here, and I think that, on the whole, so wretched an exhibition of wanton and extravagant expenditure it would be difficult to match. There is not even an apparent excuse for it. There is not even any work shown for it—not even a suggestion that the persons for whom it is intended avail themselves of it. Are we and the people to pay for the patents of nobility of those who have no blue-blood, and to provide fictitious and pretentious blue-blood for persons who have none at a cost of £7,478? Now, Sir, on all these grounds, I contend that this expenditure is wicked and profligate and unjust, and in the interests of the rich as against the poor, and if possible it is to further the creation of an unhealthy public opinion, and to add to the pickings of a sham Court. I therefore suggest to reduce the Vote.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I think the amount set down for the private secretary is a large salary for a paid secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is a man who has a very large salary, but he is only an ornamental figure-head. He devotes a great deal of time to the breeding of horses and to the playing of cricket, but beyond that no one ever heard of his doing anything. In the time of Lord Spencer the ordinary course was reversed, and no doubt Lord Spencer did take the government of Ireland in hand, but in the ordinary way the Lord Lieutenant is a mere figure-head and nothing more. He occasionally dances at some ball, or does something of that sort, and for doing that we pay him £20,000 a-year and keep two houses going for him, and we spend a good deal of money in furnishing and decorating them. I want to know why we should pay his private secretary? He does not want a private secretary at all. He has not got enough to do to keep a private secretary in exercise. He has a Parliamentary Secretary and an enormous staff of clerks, as well as an Assistant Parliamentary Secretary, and an Under Secretary, and an Assistant Under Secretary. But the whole work of the Department is provided for in the Office of the right hon. Gentleman opposite—the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant (Mr. A. J. Balfour). The Lord Lieutenant's private secretary has nothing to do; but, even supposing that he had something to do, why should we pay him £800 a-year? It is a very monstrous sum to pay him. My recollection is that the private secretaries of the Ministers of England, who are hard-worked men, get nothing like £800 a-year. High-class Civil servants—very high up in the Service—get nothing like that sum. What class of man is the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant?—for we are bound to discuss the character of a man when we pay him. The private secretary is generally a man utterly untrained in matters of this kind—a young fellow picked up somewhere and put into office and sent into a good position. He is never a gentleman trained for his duties. To pay him £800 a-year is a simple farce, even supposing that he had something to do, and that his time was fully occupied. The two questions which I wish to put to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary are these—first, what has this man got to do? and, secondly, why does he get £800 a-year? I think that £300 a-year would be an ample salary to give him.

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I wish to say a word on this subject of the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland is a secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, though in the course of recent years he has been created or has grown into something more important than that, and is now a Cabinet Minister. But, Sir, the real assistants whom the Lord Lieutenant has are in the Office of the Chief Secretary. The amount of clerical assistance which the Lord Lieutenant has comes to over £18,000 a-year, because if you look at the Chief Secretary's Vote you will find £19,000 for one year for the Chief Secretary, for an Under Secretary, for an Assistant Under Secretary, and for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the new Parliamentary Under Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! It is quite irregular to enter into a discussion upon that. That comes under a separate Vote.

Mr. MOLLOY: But I am dealing with the question of the secretary to the Lord Lieutenant.

The CHAIRMAN: But this Vote is for the Household Establishment. It has nothing whatever to do with the political functions of the Lord Lieutenant.

Mr. MOLLOY: Then that makes the case still more difficult to understand. What are the functions of this private secretary? Of course, when we appoint a secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, we understand that that secretary does secretarial duties. That was the reason why I pointed out that there was any amount of assistance provided already. But it is now made more difficult to understand. Perhaps the best thing we can do is to let the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary explain what are the duties of the private secretary, as it now appears that he is not a secretary in the ordinary sense.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Gentleman is quite intelligent enough to understand my ruling, which is to prevent confusion between the political functions of the Lord Lieutenant and those functions which pertain to his Household. The political functions are quite irrelevant to this Vote.

Mr. MOLLOY: Then since this secretary is a secretary only in the Household, and is not a political secretary, it seems to me that the case is infinitely more plain than it was made out to be by the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon); and I would ask, before we go any further, what are the functions and the duties of this gentleman who gets this £800 a-year, but who is not a political secretary, and has only to deal with the Household?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): The hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Molloy) is under some misapprehension when he says that the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant gets over £800 a-year for his services. He does not get that as private secretary—he gets part as private secretary, and part to provide clerical assistance under him. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) has said that the Lord Lieutenant has nothing to do, and, having nothing to do, there is no reason why he should have anyone to help him. That I put as a short summary of the hon. Gentleman's remarks. But I must dissent from that view altogether. It is very true that as between one Lord Lieutenant and another there may be greater work in one case than in another; but I believe there was never a case of a Lord Lieutenant who had not to perform functions of a very difficult and delicate nature, and, in some cases, of a very arduous nature. Certainly, from the knowledge I have acquired of Irish Business since I came into Office, and since I came into direct personal contact with the machinery of the Irish Government, I have been more than ever convinced that to describe the functions of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland as a sinecure, or even to describe them as existing merely for social purposes, is a description which gives altogether a false notion of the very important duties which the Lord Lieutenant has to perform. If it be true, as it is true, that the Lord Lieutenant, like other great officers of State, has to perform difficult and delicate functions, I do not think this House would be well advised if it attempted to deprive him of that assistance which every Minister has —the assistance of a private secretary. The salary of the private secretary used to be larger than it is now in amount. There has been no change under the existing holder, nor was there under his Predecessor; and every change which has been made during the century has been in the direction of diminution, and not of increase. There is one other misconception which it would be convenient for me now to correct, and which was held by the hon. and learned Member for South Donegal (Mr. Mac Neill), who opened this discussion. He gave us a long and elaborate criticism on the functions of the Ulster King-at-Arms. I do not think it is necessary that I should go into details; but when the hon. and learned Gentleman told us that in this country the hardly-pressed taxpayers were paying over £800 a-year to find pedigrees for Irish gentlemen, I would remind him that the Ulster King-at-Arms, so far from being a charge upon the country, is actually a source of profit to the Treasury. The salary is not only paid, but more than paid, by the fees he receives. [An hon. MEMBER: No, no!] Well, I believe that is so.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): There is a pledge to abolish the office.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; there is not.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Yes—it was given last year.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, I am not aware of it; and, at all events, it could not take effect until the present holder resigned. But at the present moment the office of the Ulster King-at-Arms, whether it be a necessary or unnecessary one, is not a charge upon the taxpayers. The salary of Sir Bernard Burke is more than made up by the fees received in the exercise of his duties.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): The fees are less, according to the Estimate.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think that is not so.

An hon. MEMBER: Then the Estimates are wrong.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If I am wrong——

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will give his attention to page 175—estimated extra receipts.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe the income is about £900 a-year; the salary is about £700. If I am right in saying that, of course I am correct in saying that the fees pay more than the salary. The hon. and learned Member for South Donegal (Mr. Mac Neill) alluded to the sum paid for a drummer, and made very merry over that.

MR. MAC NEILL: A kettle-drummer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That kettle-drummer is a surviving relic of the time when the Lord Lieutenant had a band which was paid for at the public expense. This drummer is the last relic of that institution, and, of course, upon his death this item will no longer appear upon the Votes. I do not think I have anything more to say.

MR. MAC NEILL: I have asked for an explanation as to the Ecclesiastical Establishment, and for some definition of the duties of those high officials, the State Steward, the Aides-de-Camps, the Gentlemen Ushers, the Riding Master, &c.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It must be evident that if you are going to have a Court—if the State is to hold a Court in Dublin—the Viceroy must have the services of the officers who are retained at all other Courts. Whether it would be a sound position to take up that there should be no Court at all is another matter—at all events, it is quite open to the hon. and learned Gentleman to use that argument; but it would not be sound to argue that, having a Representative of the Queen holding a Court in Dublin, he should not have the services which are given at every other Court.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has given no explanation with regard to the Ecclesiastical Establishment. I believe he was Chief Secretary last year—no, he was not; the right hon. Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was—when we called attention to this question, and when we pointed out that, no matter what the religion of the Lord Lieutenant might be, the religion of the chaplain should be the same. What we want is a chaplain who would conform more closely to the character of the Vicar of Bray than the present chaplain does. The late Lord Lieutenant was a Presbyterian, and under him the office of chaplain was an absolute sinecure. I do not suppose the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary goes to the Chapel Royal when he is in Dublin; and, therefore, the chaplain will have little or nothing to do. What we want is that the chaplain should be of the same religion as the Lord Lieutenant for the time being. If a Catholic were ever to be appointed to the Lord Lieutenancy—if, for instance, the hon. Member for Mid Leicestershire (Mr. De Lisle) should ever be appointed Lord Lieutenant—he would have to pay for Mass out of his own pocket, which would be a hardship. It would be a great hardship in that case to pay for a Church of Ireland chaplain, and refuse to pay for a chaplain of any other faith. What we want is to have some self-acting machinery provided by which the religion of the chaplain should always be made to conform to the religion of the Lord Lieutenant for the time being. Otherwise I shall vote against the monstrous injustice of foisting a chaplain of a particular religion upon the Lord Lieutenant against his will.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I should like to know what are the functions which we are told press so heavily upon the Lord Lieutenant, and also how much time he has spent here in London during his short period of Office? He took a house in London at a very early period, according to *The Morning Post*, and as he has nothing else to do but to go about to horse races, I should like to know how his functions are performed. We are told that he was playing cricket with the I Zingari Club when the Proclamation was issued the other day, and he had to leave the cricket field and take off his cricketing clothes in order to sign the Proclamation, after which he put on his clothes, went back to the field, and replayed cricket again. That is not a sort of thing that is calculated to impress the public mind. He is said to have high and delicate functions to perform. The person who is appointed his private secretary is not worth £800, or £600, or even £100 a-year. We know very well what his talents are. You may argue in favour of the abolition of the Lord Lieutenant; but if you must have a Lord Lieutenant you must take him with his consequences. Still, I have a strong and rooted objection to £1,000,000 a-year being spent on him—we think him dear at the price. I am not strongly opposed to the existence of the Lord Lieutenant, but I am opposed to the expenditure of so large a sum. I am opposed to the chaplain, to Mr. Mulhall, the private secretary, to the State porter, to the steward, to the telegraphist, and to the kettle-drummer. The Lord Lieutenant should be able to carry out all the duties of his Office without all these ornamental assistants. I agree with what my hon. Friend has said as to the chaplain. I have long been striving with the Nonconformists of England to raise this point about the chaplain. You have abolished the Irish Church—why is it, then, that a chaplain has to be paid, and practically a Church kept up at the expense of the State, because there is not merely a chaplain, but he has a furnished house and a reading clerk, an organist, six boy choristers, a keeper of the chapel, and additional choristers. Thus we pay for keeping up a Church of a religion to which very few of the people belong. Not only do you keep up all this staff for a disestablished Church, but you prevent the Lord Lieutenant from being a Catholic, though that is no great loss to the Catholics. Last year, when you had a Presbyterian for Lord Lieutenant, you still kept up all this State-Church machinery; and it is time for the Nonconformists of England to rally round us on the question of abolishing State prayers belonging to a religion which is not the religion of the masses of the people. My hon. Friend entertains philosophic doubts as to whether the Chief Secretary attends the chapel. I concur in that view. If the Lord Lieutenant has any religion at all other than the religion of horse-racing, he ought to be content to go to the Church of the masses of the people. Better men than he is do. We might fairly ask for the abolition of this Chapel Royal altogether. There are plenty of churches in Dublin, and the Lord Lieutenant could take his choice of them. I see the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) in his place, and I know there is little use in attacking these official institutions except to ask the Government to say that as soon as the present holders drop off they shall not be continued. We have got several promises from the Government that I remember. When you, Mr. Courtney, were at the Treasury there was a man at Portarlington who got a pension because the Huguenots went there 200 years ago, and we got a promise that that should not be continued. We ask now for the abolition of the Dean and Chaplain, the State Steward and the State Porter, as soon as the present incumbents drop off. We do not ask for more than that—we cannot go behind Johnny Mulhall's salary—but we are entitled to ask that these officials should not be continued.

Mr. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has given no explanation of the details of the work of this gentleman who acts as private secretary. It seems that he employs clerks to do his work. If he employs clerks to do anything at all it is all the same to us. I will tell the right hon. Gentleman what work must be done, though I know very little about the office. He talks to us of the most delicate functions which the Lord Lieutenant has to perform. But the particular Department under this Vote has nothing whatever to do with politics—you told us that, Mr. Courtney—and, therefore, the business of this private secretary is not business of politics or business of State, and has nothing whatever to do with delicate functions. In plain common English, his duty and business is to direct the invitations to the Castle balls, and in order to direct them he employs all these clerks. I know something of what these gentlemen are, and if he employs and pays them he is a very great fool, for he has not work enough to keep them employed two days, or even one day a week. Now, what does it all come to? We have got this man to pay, and are called upon to vote £829 a-year for him for helping to discharge certain functions—functions so delicate that you cannot get the slightest hint as to what they are. I protest against this item. We know perfectly well what are the delicate duties of the Lord Lieutenant, if he has any, and I believe he has none. If he has any business connected with State or with his Office apart from his social duties, he has an enormous staff under the pay and control of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, more than sufficient for all the duties he has to perform. All that he has to do he does, as a matter of course, through the secretaries and under secretaries, and an enormous staff of clerks connected with the Chief Secretary's Department. This private secretary of his will have nothing to do except to attend to social matters. I want to have some indication of what the duties of this man are. In the first place, he may direct the invitations to the Castle balls. Then he may be employed in writing love-letters for the Lord Lieutenant, or else in looking after his betting-books—a matter of very great importance, no doubt; but I do not see why this House should be asked to pay for it. We are entitled to have some details as to what the duties are of the man who is paid this salary. In order to raise this question, I beg to move to reduce the Vote by the sum of £829, the amount of the salary of this private secretary.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A—for Salaries—be reduced by £829, for the Salary of the Private Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant and his Clerks."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not comment, Mr. Courtney, on the taste of the last few observations which fell from the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) in attacking a man who is not here to defend himself; but I will endeavour to explain to the Committee as well as I can a matter which I should have thought would not require a very long explanation. The hon. Gentleman asks what are the duties of the Lord Lieutenant. They are of two kinds, both of them important and onerous. The Lord Lieutenant is a Member of the Government of Ireland, and, as such, he is cognizant of all the acts of the Government of Ireland. He is consulted, and has considerable authority as to the policy pursued by the Government of Ireland. Hon. Gentlemen opposite will not think the Government of Ireland is so easy, and its details so few and simple, that anybody in the high and responsible position of the Lord Lieutenant can be said in that respect to hold a sinecure. Besides these functions, he has great social duties to perform. [*Ironical cheers and laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen may object to the peformance of such duties; but they will hardly deny that if they are to be performed they bring with them no small degree of labour and responsibility. When any man has to perform duties which I have thus described, it is perfectly absurd to say that he has not a right to such clerical assistance in the shape of these private secretaries and others as he may require. Every hon. Gentleman who has had anything to do with official life must know that it is absurd to ask the Lord Lieutenant or anyone else to depend upon the ordinary clerks of a public office. There is a vast amount of correspondence of a very confidential kind, which must be dealt with by a man in the position of the Lord Lieutenant; and just as any other Minister of State requires a private secretary, so does the Lord Lieutenant require one, and ought to have one. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) appeared to insinuate that the Lord Lieutenant did not perform the duties I have described. The hon. and learned Gentleman is entirely in error. I am the person best capable in this House of judging how much the Lord Lieutenant does, and ever since I held my Office I have received constant advice and assistance from him in——

DR. TANNER: Is that why he is always in England?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In all the details of affairs in Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How many days has he spent in Ireland?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not believe the Office has ever been filled more efficiently than now. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members may take exception to that statement; but I am not aware that their sources of information are so good as mine. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) spoke upon the question raised previously in the debate as to the chaplain of the Established Church.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Not the Established Church.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I mean the Disestablished Church. That same question was raised last year by hon. Members below the Gangway, when Lord Aberdeen, a Presbyterian, was Lord Lieutenant; but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), who was then Chief Secretary, and who is not—so far as I am aware—an ardent member of the Church of England or of Ireland, stated his opinion that the Vote should be passed in its present form; and if that was so when he was Chief Secretary, and when Lord Aberdeen was Lord Lieutenant, I need only say that any argument he used has double force under the circumstances in which we now find ourselves.

DR. TANNER: My hon. Friend has asked why this large sum of money is to be paid by the State. We object to it as a mockery, and as an underhand means of imposing on the people. We find very large salaries paid, many of these gentlemen receiving £200 a-year each; and many of them having only literary *nous* enough to attend at State balls in evening clothes with light blue facings. They are very, very nice—I remember that the hon. Member for Antrim looked downright handsome in them. We do not object to the Lord Lieutenant being allowed a private secretary, but we object to his being paid so inordinate a salary. I think I am entitled to ask for the assistance of the right hon. Gentleman the First

Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) in this matter. I would ask him to come down with his sledge-hammer of clôture on this and all other useless offices—offices that are not only useless, but absolutely ridiculous.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): The language of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland in regard to this Office was marked by mock heroics. It is sheer nonsense to talk of the Lord Lieutenant and the responsible duties he has to go through. Anybody who will take the smallest trouble to follow the records of the performances of the Lord Lieutenant during his tenure of Office will find that the greater portion of his time has been spent in England, and the small balance which has been passed in Ireland has been devoted to visits to photographic shops and an attendance at flower shows. Very often a trivial observation that may be dropped from a speaker betrays more of the real drift of his thoughts and the working of his mind than more open phraseology. In the few words dropped by the right hon. Gentleman I think we have a clue to the whole matter. He referred to the constant advice and assistance which he has received from the Lord Lieutenant, who was "nominally his superior." That casual phrase betrayed the whole case. The right hon. Gentleman has gravely assured us that he has received advice and assistance from the Lord Lieutenant. If it were not for the large amount involved in the Vote, I should look upon the whole of the proceedings of Lord Londonderry as a sort of pantomime got up for the delectation of a very small section of the people of Dublin who aspire to occupy an aristocratic position in the upper circles. The Lord Lieutenant may have social duties to perform; but my contention is that when the Lord Lieutenant gets £20,000 a-year he is very well paid for performing those social duties, and that it is too much to ask that an additional £829 a-year for the performance of secretarial duties which must be of the lightest and most elementary character. Most Members of the Government in this House can get a good private secretary for £300 a-year, and no one can contend that the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant's Household can have anything like the same amount of work to perform. When the Committee come to discuss the Department of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary [they will come into contact with really serious work, and I think it will be found that the private secretary of the right hon. Gentleman receives £400 a-year—very much less than the amount of remuneration received by the private secretary of the Lord Lieutenant. I think it is grossly unfair to ask the British and Irish ratepayer to continue paying these sums for services that are not rendered or performed. Of course, it is the duty of the right hon. Gentleman in this House to defend this and all other Votes; but it is our duty to criticize such payments and call the attention of the country to them. I cannot at all consent to the contention of the right hon. Gentleman, that if you are to have a Lord Lieutenant in Ireland at all you must necessarily pay all these ridiculous items in order to keep up the Office. I think that the Lord Lieutenant himself receives an unnecessarily high salary for performing merely honorary duties. He receives no less than £20,000 a-year, which, to my mind, is a most lavish sum. Lord Spencer was in the receipt of a similar sum; but he had a very considerable amount of work to do in connection with the Government of Ireland. No one will seriously contend that Lord Londonderry does anything like the same amount of work, and it will require all the ability of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to induce the House to believe that Lord Londonderry fairly earns the salary paid to him. We all know the great ability of the right hon. Gentleman and his power of assertion; but it will require the utmost exertion of both to prove to the satisfaction of the House that the present Lord Lieutenant performs any serious work in Ireland at all, and that he is anything more than an overpaid official performing useless functions, which are not for the benefit either of Ireland or of the people of that country.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I noticed a curious omission in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He rose for the purpose of justifying the amount of salary paid to the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; but in the course of his speech he did not give us the slightest indication as to how this £829 is divided between the private secretary and his clerks. Let me suppose that there are two clerks, each of whom receives £100. That would actually leave the private secretary in receipt of £600, although the private secretary to the right hon. Gentleman himself only receives £400, and the private secretary to the Under Secretary merely receives £100. Even admitting, which I very much doubt, that the Lord Lieutenant has appreciable State functions to perform in Ireland, it will not be denied that the private secretary to the right hon. Gentleman has more to do than the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, while the private secretary to the Under Secretary has most duties to perform of the three, because, as everyone knows, the private secretary to the Under Secretary located at the Castle is the officer on whom the burden of the work devolves. I should certainly like to know how it is that the private secretary to the right hon. Gentleman only receives £400 a-year, while the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant gets £600 a-year. I see no proportion in these figures, and I think my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) has done good service in moving the omission of this amount. I was greatly surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman say, in the presence of the Representatives of the Irish people, that he has received valuable advice and assistance from the Lord Lieutenant. Although the Lord Lieutenant, as a racing man, is not troubled with too much modesty, I am sure that no one will be more surprised, when he reads the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, than Lord Londonderry himself to find that he gives valuable advice to the right hon. Gentleman. Even in his most sanguine moments, and however much his self-esteem may be, the Lord Lieutenant must inwardly smile at the suggestion that he has ever rendered valuable assistance to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, or given him valuable advice, or, indeed, that he has given valuable advice or assistance to anybody. If there was ever any occasion on which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would consult the Lord Lieutenant if he valued his opinion, it would have been last month when he went over to Ireland for the purpose of issuing the Proclamations under the Crimes Act. That was certainly an occasion when a Lord Lieutenant, if he were capable of giving valuable advice to anybody, would have been called in to advise the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. But what did the right hon. Gentleman do? Did he consult the Lord Lieutenant?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Lord Lieutenant was consulted on all questions connected with the Proclamations.

MR. SEXTON: The Proclamations were signed on Friday, the 19th instant, on which day the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary reached Ireland; and on the 19th the Lord Lieutenant was not in Ireland at all. But the Lord Lieutenant arrived in Ireland on the following day. When the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary went over to Ireland, he went to his own Lodge and not to the Viceregal residence in the Phœnix Park, and he there spent the Friday afternoon in having interviews with the magistrates and the police, and it was in those interviews, which were carried on officially, that the right hon. Gentleman settled the suspension of the Constitutional rights of the people of Ireland. The Lord Lieutenant was not in Ireland on that day, and had nothing whatever to do with the matter. He turned up in Ireland the next morning—Saturday morning—but by the time he arrived the Proclamations had been drafted, and it was on the Friday night that the determination to suspend the Constitutional liberties of the people was arrived at. Surely, if the Lord Lieutenant was worth being consulted, and the right hon. Gentleman thought so, he would have taken steps to insure that he would have been in Ireland on that occasion, so that he might have been consulted. I cannot see how he justifies the opinion he has expressed in reference to the Lord Lieutenant with his own act in setting him aside when the Proclamations were drafted; because, as I have shown, the Lord Lieutenant was actually in another country at the time that took place. Surely that fact puts altogether aside the assertion of the right hon. Gentleman that the advice of the Lord Lieutenant is of any value whatever. Now, we know what the private secretary does. He writes Lord Londonderry's speeches. As everybody knows, Lord Londonderry sat for years in this House, and he never made a speech. I know, of course, that that is only a negative; but if, when he had no private secretary, he made no speeches, it is only fair to assume now that he has a private secretary, and does make speeches, that the private secretary writes them for him. Mr. Mulhall, the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, is a clever gentleman, who accompanies the Lord Lieutenant on all his tours, and as the Lord Lieutenant does not undertake the responsibility of writing his own speeches himself, they are written for him by Mr. Mulhall. Certainly, they are speeches we do not greatly admire, because they are speeches which are opposed to the views and wishes of the Irish people, and they are generally speeches with a political tinge. But what I maintain is that any person who is appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland ought to be intelligent enough to make his own speeches. He ought to be intelligent enough, at any rate, to write his own speeches.

An hon. MEMBER: Oh, dear no; that is not at all necessary.

MR. SEXTON: Then, at any rate, he ought to be intelligent enough to make his speeches without writing them. I know my hon. Friend below the Gangway, who interpolated a remark just now, comes from that part of the country where these speeches are delivered. All I contend is, that if the Lord Lieutenant is incapable of making the speeches he delivers, or any part of them, that the man who does make them for him ought to receive this £20,000 a-year.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I only rise for the purpose of correcting an error into which the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast has fallen with reference to the events which preceded the recent Proclamation. It is perfectly true that, on the afternoon when I arrived at Dublin for the purpose of consulting certain officials, the Lord Lieutenant was not in Ireland. So far the hon. Member is correct. It is also true that the Lord Lieutenant did not arrive until the next morning; but the hon. Member assumes, without any justification whatever, and in contradiction to the real facts of the case, that everything was settled before the Lord Lieutenant's arrival, and that he had nothing to do except to give official sanction to a plan already arranged. That assertion is entirely without foundation. At 12 o'clock on the day of the arrival of the Lord Lieutenant I had an interview with His Excellency, and discussed the matter with him before the sitting of the Privy Council.

MR. SEXTON: Then I will complete my statement. The Lord Lieutenant arrived in Ireland on Saturday morning; he turned up on Saturday afternoon, and attended a meeting of the Privy Council.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is entirely contrary to the fact.

MR. SEXTON: Did the right hon. Gentleman, before the Proclamations were agreed to, consult the Lord Lieutenant in regard to them?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; and I saw His Excellency at the Privy Council, and discussed the question there.

MR. SEXTON: Did the interview between the Lord Lieutenant and the right hon. Gentleman result in any alteration of the arrangements which were made?

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member is not in Order in catechizing the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): The Motion before the Committee is to reduce the Vote by £829, the sum allowed to the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and I think we are entitled to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for information to enable us to judge whether the payment of so large a sum is justifiable. We have had a statement that the private secretary has purely decorative work to perform in the secretary's office; but if the private secretary to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is well paid with a salary of £400 a-year, I do not see why the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant should receive more than double that amount. The secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, whose duties are simply connected with the hospitality of the Viceregal Lodge in the Phœnix Park, certainly ought not to receive so enormous a salary as £829 a-year. Knowing how the public expenditure has a tendency to grow, I think it is the duty of Members of this House to look into old-established salaries and customs in Ireland, in order to see to what point they may be able to reduce them; and I am further of opinion that on this side of the House, at all events, we are bound to bring whatever criticism we can to bear upon them, with a view of reducing the public expenditure to a lower level than that at which it now stands. I, for one, intend to vote for a reduction of this salary, and I think it is quite evident that the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant cannot be entitled to more than the sum of £400 a-year, which is paid to the responsible private secretary to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Speaking of the onerous duties which the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has to discharge, I think the whole performance of the Executive Government of Ireland partakes, in a great measure, of the histrionic character. There is a great deal of play in the whole thing; and just as, on the stage, it is very easy to get a man to act a lord, it is just as hard to get one to act a costermonger. The same thing applies to the Irish Government. As everyone knows, the easiest character to perform in the Government of Ireland is that of the Lord Lieutenant, and, for fear the Lord Lieutenant should not be able to perform the functions he is required to discharge in Ireland, he is provided with a private secretary. There are few hon. Members in this House who know, from personal observation, what is the ordinary routine of the Lord Lieutenant's life in Ireland better than I do; and it certainly seems to me that all the present Lord Lieutenant has ever done in Ireland has been to attend photographic galleries with his lady, to be present at flower shows and cricket matches, and perform other arduous duties of the same kind. No doubt, these things are very well in themselves, and may stimulate the loyalty of the people of Ireland, especially if the Lord Lieutenant happens to be a handsome man. It certainly stimulates the loyalty of the ladies of Ireland; but where, in Ireland, you have thousands and thousands of persons driven out upon the roadside, who are actually starving, as the Representative of West Kerry I can confidentially assure the Committee that it is a very poor consolation to my constituents, who are victims of the action of the Government which the Lord Lieutenant represents to find that they can occasionally get a photograph of the Lord Lieutenant sent down to them. This Vote, however, is not for the Lord Lieutenant, but for the private secretary to Lord Londonderry. I think this is not the first occasion on which we have had a sort of Parliamentary discussion upon private secretaries and their duties. The present Government seem to have a mania for this sort of thing. They have private secretaries everywhere in reference to Ireland. There are private secretaries three deep. The Lord Lieutenant has a private secretary, the Chief Secretary has a private secretary, the Under Secretary has a private secretary, and then there is an Assistant Secretary to the Chief Secretary. We, who know something of Ireland, and its requirements, cannot appreciate the work they do, even if the money they receive in the shape of salaries were not to come out of our own pockets. I do not see why, if the money were to come out of other people's pockets, they should be called upon to pay for work which is really not done. I want to have this fact emphasized. I think the Irish taxpayer has to pay penny for penny, and halfpenny for halfpenny, equally with the British taxpayer for this expenditure.

An hon. MEMBER: It is highway robbery.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Yes, certainly; highway robbery all round, I believe. Now, the private secretary to the Lord Lieutenant is located in a certain corner of the Castle yard, which enjoys a peculiar name. Now, "God's acre," we all know, is the good old Saxon phrase; but hon. Members will be astonished to hear that in this case the private secretary's office is situated in what is called the "Devil's Half-Acre," and the "Devil's Half-Acre" is as well known as Nelson's Pillar, or anything of that kind in Dublin. The phrase "Devil's Half-Acre" represents the idea of the people that the work done there will not bear the light—that it is work which, in reality, shuns the light. I am afraid that as long as the people make use of these odious names, and have such ideas in their minds in regard to the duties and functions of your private secretaries, and the *personnel* of the Government of Ireland, the more you stir these matters up the more unsavoury effluvia you will get from them. I am quite satisfied that if these matters were fairly discussed in the light of day, and hon. Members would come in to discuss them with the minds of impartial jurors, a clean sweep would soon be made. If there were really a desire to pass an honest and discriminating judgment upon this Vote, I believe it might be reduced by three-fourths.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS (Berwickshire): May I make an appeal to hon. Members below the Gangway to come to a decision? The line of argument taken up by hon. Members is certainly a singular one, so far as the salary of the Lord Lieutenant's private secretary is concerned. Surely, if the Lord Lieutenant is incapable he ought to have an exceedingly good private secretary, who should be well paid. I have had some experience of the work which a private secretary has to perform, having had a father-in-law and a brother-in-law who were Lord Lieutenants, and I know that the work which a private secretary has to do is not only hard work, but requires an experienced and capable man.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 60; Noes 115: Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 436.) [5.35 P.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £789, being the amount of the salary and allowances connected with the Chapel Royal. Inasmuch as Parliament has destroyed the Established Church in Ireland, I am of opinion that all the appendages connected with that Church should cease to exist, and this is one of them. I believe that it has been of great advantage to Ireland to have got rid of the Established Church, seeing that its existence gave rise not only to political but to religious animosities. I cannot see what defence can be made for continuing this Vote so long as there is no Established Church in Ireland. That is one reason why I shall move the reduction of the Vote. But there is another ground also—namely, that this is a standing insult to the majority of the people of Ireland, who are, as we all know, Roman Catholics. It is opposed to the spirit of the age in which we are living, and is a direct insult to the great body of the Catholic people of Ireland. We have been desirous, as far as we possibly could, to remove all signs of inequality in regard to religious matters in Ireland; and the time has now arrived, I think, when we should get rid of this Vote, which, as I have said, is not only an insult to the Catholic population of Ireland, but an insult to the Christian religion itself. Christian people believe in the carrying out of their principles by voluntary means, and not by compulsion. Any religion which wants to be maintained by compulsion is not worth preserving. Therefore, I believe that this Vote is not only an insult to the Catholics of Ireland, but also an insult to religion itself. Everybody connected with the Vote appears to be paid. The chaplain, the reading clerks, and various other persons, receive salaries; the only persons who are left out in the cold are the congregation. Now, I think that if anybody ought to be paid it is the congregation. Every person connected with this small Establishment receives payment for their services; but, nevertheless, the attendance of worshippers is very small indeed. There is another argument in favour of getting rid of this payment—namely, that these are not days of extravagance. We have been told *ad nauseam* of the poverty of Ireland, and yet we see this great waste of money. The taxes out of which this item is paid come from the pockets of the people; and I think it is high time that such extravagant expenditure was put a stop to. I therefore beg to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £789; and I hope the Committee will support me, so that we may, at least, remove one standing grievance which exists between the people of Ireland and of this country.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item C—£789, Salaries and Allowances, Chapel—be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Handel Cossham.*)

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I rise to support the Motion of the hon. Member for East Bristol (Mr. Cossham) as an Irishman and a Catholic, and I am extremely glad that it has come from an English Member and a Protestant. I have no objection whatever to a State religion being provided, if it is in consonance with the feelings of the people, or in accordance with the religion of the bulk of the population; but, in the present position of the Irish Church, I think there are practical objections to the continuance of this Vote. There is, in reality, no established staff in connection with the Episcopalian Church in Ireland; but so long as this Chapel Royal is maintained I am afraid it will be held to be a reason why the Prime Minister should not appoint a Catholic Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. It would help to do away with one of those troublesome questions which have a tendency to prevent a Ministry from selecting the best man for the post. I should not object to the Lord Lieutenant having a chaplain at a salary of £200 or £300 a-year. But here we have no less than eight or 10 persons with eight or 10 different interests provided for, whom it would be extremely difficult to disestablish if a Catholic Lord Lieutenant were appointed. No doubt the chaplain may be changed, and some other person appointed; but it would be very difficult to get rid of the whole Establishment. One of the Lord Lieutenants, who was appointed some years ago, was popularly supposed not to have been an Episcopalian; but I do not know what his actual religion was. The existence of this institution did not prevent his appointment; but I am satisfied that it would prevent the appointment of a Catholic Lord Lieutenant. In my opinion, what ought to be done is to get rid of this Establishment, and allow the Lord Lieutenant to have a chaplain of the particular denomination to which he himself belongs. I must say that this item, which appears annually in the Votes, is a relic of the old system of ascendancy in Ireland, and ought to be abolished. At the same time, neither I nor the hon. Member for East Bristol, nor any Irish Member, desires to be at all hard on the clergyman who is now discharging the duties of chaplain. We think that if the office were abolished he would have a clear claim to compensation, although I am not able to say what he ought to get. What I maintain is, that the Government ought not to make any fresh appointments. I presume that they will carry this Vote against us; but, if they do, I do not think they ought to make a new appointment as vacancies in these subordinate offices arise, but they should leave them to die out. It is evident that this Establishment must some day or other, and I believe very shortly, be got rid of. [An hon. MEMBER: No, no!] My hon. Friend opposite who says "No, no!" is one of those who is determined to maintain all true-blue Conservative principles. I am only expressing my own opinion. I believe that the Establishment will be abolished shortly; and, seeing that the whole bulk of the Irish Members are against keeping it up, I do not think any fresh appointments ought to be made. I trust that the Government will make some reply to the observations which have been made, in order to show that they have the interests of the country, to a certain extent, at heart.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid.): In my opinion, a chaplain should be appointed of whatever form of religion the Lord Lieutenant for the time being may profess. I would put it to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, or whoever is responsible for this Vote, that as soon as the gentleman who now holds the appointment has ceased to occupy it, no further appointment should be made by the Government, but that the appointment of chaplain should be allowed to rest with the Lord Lieutenant himself. It appears to me to be an insult to the Lord Lieutenant to say that he must have a chaplain appointed by the Government without giving him any option or choice in the matter. However, there can be no great economy in saving a sum of £700 or £800, and therefore I do not see the advisability of depriving the Lord Lieutenant for the time being of his chaplain; and certainly, if you appoint a chaplain and say that he is to perform certain duties, he ought to be paid for them. My only contention is that the Lord Lieutenant should have the right of appointing his chaplain himself. Why should you deprive the Lord Lieutenant of the right which you give to other Members of the Government of appointing their own officials? If, as soon as the present chaplain ceases to hold the office, the Lord Lieutenant for the time being is given the right of appointing any chaplain he thinks fit, he can then appoint a gentleman of his own religion.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I recollect on one occasion some years ago going to this Chapel Royal in the lower Castle Yard. I went there out of curiosity. There are a very great number of churches all round. In one direction and about 25 yards off there is a church, and in another direction I found another. The Chapel Royal is also quite close to Christ Church Cathedral, and, in point of fact, it is surrounded by a number of churches in different directions. Added to that is the fact that nobody ever attends the services. The clergyman who was officiating was not the chaplain. As a rule the chaplain is too grand a personage to perform the duties; therefore he gets some minor clergyman to do them. That was the case on the occasion to which I refer, and I can assure the House that upon that occasion there were not 12 people in the church, the majority of whom were, like myself, attracted by curiosity. I mention this fact in order to show that the appointment is a sham; and bearing that fact in mind and knowing that these shams are so transparent, and that the people are calling loudly for the exercise of economy, I, as an Irish Protestant, ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to do away with this last relic of the old ascendancy system. I, as an Irish Protestant, am quite satisfied that the religion to which I have the honour to belong has been vastly and materially improved by doing away with the Established Church. I would, therefore, ask the right hon. Gentleman to get rid of this sham, and do away with this relic of ascendancy, by which he will do a work of service to the whole of the country, and especially to the taxpayers. I cannot agree in one remark which was made by my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenny). He said this is only a matter of £700 or £800, and therefore it was hardly worth considering; but we all know that pence make shillings and that shillings make pounds, and it is not because an item is small, if it is unjust and extravagant, that it should be allowed to remain. I ask the right hon. Gentleman, in the name of justice and common sense, to consent to the demand which has been made upon him.

Mr. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I shall vote for the reduction of this amount on the ground which has been stated by the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner). At the same time, I should like to vote for the amount which is necessary to maintain the building, because I do not think we should allow the structure itself to be neglected. The hon. Member for Mid Tyrone has referred to the smallness of the Vote; but if we were to adopt his principle, and were to allow any expenditure to be lightly passed without investigation, we must inevitably land ourselves in the end in the extravagance which he has condemned. I rose chiefly to support the Motion of the hon. Member for East Bristol (Mr. Handel Cossham) on the ground that, having got rid of the Church Establishment in Ireland, it is high time that we should get rid of this last relic of religious inequality in that country. I think it would do good to the Protestant religion itself, of which this Vote is the sole remaining official champion. It would also do good to the Roman Catholic religion, which is undoubtedly insulted by voting this official expenditure in behalf of an alien religion. We got rid 20 years ago of the Protestant Episcopalian Church as the Established Church of Ireland, and I think it is most unfortunate that the Lord Lieutenant's salary was not then increased by some £500 or £600 in order that he might himself appoint a chaplain, if it is desirable for him to have one, so that there should be no longer any official recognition of the Espiscopal Church. This is one of the anomalies in Ireland which will certainly have to be removed at some time or other. On the present occasion I would willingly spare the Committee the trouble of a Division if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would give an assurance that there should be no further appointment when any vacancy arises. Failing an assurance of that kind, I hope that the hon. Member for East Bristol will take a Division upon the Vote, if only for the purpose of entering a protest against any continuance of this principle of religious ascendancy in Ireland.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I think we are entitled to some reply from the Government, who are bound to justify, if they can, the support of this chaplaincy out of the public purse. A feeling has arisen against paying from that source for the ministration of any particular creed. The last Census Returns showed that the population of Ireland was something over 5,000,000, of whom

640,000 were members of the Irish Church, 4,000,000 Catholics, who, of course, could not agree to pay for the religious services of a creed to which they do not belong, and the rest is made up of Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and other denominations, besides 1,244 persons who refused to say that they belonged to any denomination at all. This chaplain gets £330 a-year, whereas there are many of the clergy of Ireland who receive £40 only, and I know priests who have scarcely £30 a-year to live upon. While that is so, I certainly object to the chaplain to the Lord Lieutenant having £330 a-year. We must recollect that it is not long ago that religious disabilities were done away with in Ireland. I think the hon. Gentleman who spoke a few minutes ago made a suggestion worthy of the consideration of the Government when he said that, instead of allowing this money for the services of a particular creed, it would be better to place the amount which might be proper at the disposal of the Lord Lieutenant, and leave it to his discretion to supply himself with the spiritual aid which he may think necessary for himself. I hope this will be done, so that if a Presbyterian Lord Lieutenant comes in he may have the means of supplying himself with the ministrations of his own Church.

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) was Chief Secretary for Ireland, he was opposed to this Vote on the ground that the Lord Lieutenant, who was a Presbyterian, ought to have the appointment of a Presbyterian minister; and that was to some extent admitted by the Predecessor of the present Chief Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne then said that he had had a communication with the Lord Lieutenant, who stated that he had attended the Episcopal Church and had derived benefit from so doing. Upon that, no one objected to the Vote then before the Committee, although I should mention that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne strongly guarded himself against expressing any approval of the Vote. Let me point out a reason why the suggestion of my hon. Friend should be accepted. The Lord Mayor of London holds a dignified and important post. He has his chaplain, who is paid for out of the taxation of the City of London; but the Lord Mayor always appoints a minister of his own Church, and no one has ever objected to the salary. The Sheriffs of London also appoint their own chaplains.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER (London): The hon. and learned Gentleman is not quite correct in one part of his statement. The Sheriffs of London appoint their own chaplains; but the chaplain of the Lord Mayor is always a member of the Church of England.

Mr. MOLLOY: I am obliged to the hon. Baronet. I remember the point now. We do not object to the Lord Lieutenant having the liberty of appointment to the fullest extent; but we object now, and have objected for several years, that you should force upon the Lord Lieutenant a minister who is not a member of his own Church. Take your Vote for all that is necessary for Divine Service and we will agree to it for all time; but do not compel the Lord Lieutenant to appoint a minister of a creed different from his own, because otherwise you create a sinecure. The proposal we make is exceedingly reasonable, and it is, in my opinion, one which the Government might at once accept.

Sir ROBERT FOWLER: As the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite probably knows, the next Lord Mayor will be a member of the Roman Catholic Church. I have pointed out that the Lord Mayor must appoint a chaplain who is a clergyman of the Church of England, as he has to preach in the church which the Corporation attends officially. With regard to the Sheriffs, the appointment is entirely a question for themselves.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): As far as I know there has been but one Lord Lieutenant of Ireland who has belonged to any other creed than that of the Church of England, and he quite approved the arrangement made with regard to the chaplain. Looking at this as a purely abstract question, there is no doubt that the chaplain ought to be of the same denomination as the Lord Lieutenant. Although we think that no alteration should be made in the Vote which would in any way interfere with vested interests, I am quite ready to consider the question of altering the form in which the Vote appears on the Paper.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. MOLLOY (King's Co., Birr): I have an objection to the Vote for the Insignia of the Order of St. Patrick, on the ground that these honours are conferred on certain noblemen, not for any service done to their countrymen, but simply for their own personal dignity. The noblemen who receive these distinctions are, as a rule, perfectly able to pay for them; but whether they are or not, I think that, if they are conferred for the sole purpose of giving men greater dignity amongst their peers, it is hard that the taxpayers of the country should be asked to pay for them. Now, the amount is very small—it is only £60 in all—but the principle involved is one which, in my opinion, the House ought not to recognize year after year. If any man in the Army or Navy does his country a service, and dignity and honour is attached to his name, this House is always willing to pay for it; but the men I am now considering are, as a rule, unknown in political life and in the Public Service of their country; and I have in my mind two or three cases in which this honour has been conferred upon men who are utterly unknown in this country. What reason is there for the money of the taxpayers being spent on their insignia? I would willingly agree to this in the case of public servants in the Army or Navy; but in the particular cases before us are we not entitled to ask that these honours should be paid for by those who receive them? I think we are, and therefore move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £60.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E—Incidental Expenses, Office of Arms, £60—be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Molloy.*)

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I hope the hon. Gentleman will not press this Amendment. The Knights of St. Patrick pay large fees when they have this honour conferred upon them, and have to pay for the insignia also. This Vote is simply for repairs.

Mr. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): Is the amount actually spent?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): The sum of money is certainly not large, but there is a principle involved here. Those who receive those distinctions are either totally unknown, or else they are persons whose public career is not approved by or agreeable to the people of Ireland, and therefore we object to pay any part of the expense of this Order, and, moreover, I think the Vote is unreasonable, because, if they pay for their insignia in the first instance, why should they not also pay for repairs? I do not know whether these insignia are so ricketty as to require to be repaired year after year; but, however that may be, I should have less objection to this if you did not call the Order by the name of St. Patrick. You have saints in England whose names you could use, and we object that you have not only taken possession of our country, but also of the name of our national saint.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I also object to this item of the Vote, and to the slovenly way in which the Estimate is drawn. The Vote says that the money is for the Insignia and Banners of St. Patrick; but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland says it is for repairs done to them. Either the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is right and the Estimates wrong; and if the former is the case, I say that this is obtaining money under false statistics. I do not see why the Knights of St. Patrick should get from the public purse £60 a-year for emblazoning and repairing their insignia, and certainly, as that is not stated on the Estimate, I shall not allow it to pass without a protest.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): This £60 for insignia passes my comprehension. There are certainly a number of stalls which are allocated to these Knights, and a lot of old banners which are placed over those stalls. One of the great honours in connection with this foolish institution of the Order of St. Patrick is its antiquity. We know that the older the banners of these institutions the more they are revered; and, therefore, what is the use of putting up a new banner on the occasion of an instalment, when an old banner would do as well? It has been mentioned that a portion of the insignia consists of an old helmet and two old swords with gilding on them. I believe that one Knight has been made during the course of the last two or three months, and probably the cost of his two swords and helmet will not appear on this Estimate. I cannot understand how it is that so much money is spent on so little show, and I have no doubt that it is being wasted in some way. As to the Order itself, as my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) has stated, we hope it will be done away with as soon as possible. I must certainly ask the right hon. Gentleman to explain that item of the banners. Is it for putting up new banners or renovating the old ones? because, to my knowledge, they are not renovated. They are left hanging; it is only on the installation of a new Knight that a new banner is required, and certainly one of these new banners would not cost £60. Under these circumstances, I look for a little further information from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): As I understand the matter, it is that a certain amount of money is required from time to time for repairing the insignia and replacing the banners in St. Patrick's Hall, and that is the expense which falls on the Exchequer. On the other hand, every Knight of the Order pays fees to the amount of £300.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I believe that the item for the Queen's Plates is objectionable to some hon. Members. For my part, I neither rise to propose the reduction nor the increase of the Vote; and if I am asked why I stand up at all, my answer is that I do so for the purpose of suggesting a more sensible and fair distribution of the money. There are 15 Queen's Plates given in Ireland, and I believe they are given practically to a certain class of races which take place within easy reach of Dublin Castle. I do not pretend to know the origin and history of these Plates; but I fancy they were instituted with the idea of encouraging the breeding of horses in Ireland. One would, in that case, suppose that the Sovereign who instituted them would encourage the breeding of horses in other parts of the country than that in the vicinity of Dublin. It would be a strong measure if I were to advocate an increase of the Vote; but I speak in the interest of my hon. Friends below the Gangway, and say that there has not been an equal distribution of these Plates. It is in the outlying parts of the country where these things are wanted. I appeal to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet—the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland—(Colonel King-Harman) than whom I suppose there are few in this House who know more about hunting and such matters; I think that all Irish gentlemen and landlords who are such thorough-going pacers in their own way will be in sympathy with me in this matter. We know that in future one of the most useful industries in Ireland will be the breeding of horses, and therefore I say we ought to encourage local races in Ireland, for you may have horses reared like Liberator who, after winning the local and other races, was entered for the Grand National and won that. I trust my suggestion will receive the attention of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. COX (Clare, E.): I have great pleasure in supporting the observations of my hon. Friend the Member for West Kerry (Mr. Edward Harrington) on the subject of the Queen's Plates. I quite agree with him in the opinion that these Plates are altogether misapplied; three only go to Ulster, and none to Leinster; and it is because the Plates have not been properly distributed that they have failed altogether to bring about what was originally intended—namely, the improvement of the breed of horses in Ireland. I venture to address a few remarks to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary for Ireland, and to say that, however much we may differ on political grounds, I believe on the subject of horses we are thoroughly agreed. I think if the Government were to give less to the Curragh, and more to the outlying districts, as suggested by my hon. Friend, it would be a great improvement, and then it would not happen, as it does now, that one or two horses, year after year, take all the Queen's Plates. I have found myself that, as a rule, they are won by walks over, and that they are monopolized by a single horse. For my own part, I should be glad if I could move to increase this Vote; but, as I cannot do that, I would impress on the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) that the Irish Government should put themselves in communication with racing men and prominent horse-breeders throughout the length and breadth of the country, so as to discover, if possible, means by which the Queen's Plates may bring about the result they were intended to produce. We know that Ireland cannot compete with Englishmen on the flat, but across country we can hold our own, and I think that, instead of giving the Queen's Plates for flat racing, we should give a few for steeplechases, to be run for over a course of four miles or so. I believe by that you would give a good deal of encouragement to the breeding of horses in Ireland, because it is in steeplechasers and weight-carrying hunters that we can hold our own. This is the suggestion I have to make to the Government, particularly to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, who takes, I know, a considerable interest in the question of horse-breeding in Ireland; and I trust he will, after consultation with those I have indicated, be able to allocate the Plates in future in a way that will carry out the object with which they were instituted.

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY for IRELAND (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I agree with a good deal that has fallen from hon. Gentlemen who have spoken on this subject, especially the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Clare (Mr. Cox), whom I have seen ride a good race across country. There is one point on which, however, I do not quite agree with the hon. Member. The fact is that when we get a good flat racer in Ireland he generally commands a good price, and in more ways than one I certainly think we can hold our own. I think it is a good suggestion that we should consider the question whether some of the Queen's Plates might not be put to the use which the hon. Member has described. I do not think it would encourage horse-breeding to a large extent, although, at the same time, I believe there is something to be said in favour of it, and that it is a matter which the Government might consider with a view to taking some steps in the direction indicated.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I intend to move the reduction of this Vote. I have heard it argued that it is one of those Votes which excites discussion only because it is usually divided against. I intend, if I can find an hon. Member to tell with me, to divide against it to-night, because I think it a thoroughly immoral principle to vote public money for the encouragement of gambling. That is the theory I have always laid down with regard to the Queen's Plates, and it is one which cannot be controverted. Some years ago the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), who himself is a practical horse-racer, protested in the strongest manner against this Vote, and gave pregnant reasons why it should not be continued. It is said to be intended to improve the breed of horses in Ireland, but it does nothing of the sort. It has a bad effect as it is at present applied, and in all probability the result would be the same if it was given for steeplechasing. I believe if you gave the Queen's Plates for steeplechasing in any part of Ireland that the result would be that horses would come from places where there are large numbers to select from, and carry off all the Plates. It is all very well to make them apply to particular districts; but that would shut out all competition, and it would amount to a walk-over for some particular horse in the neighbourhood. Again, the discussion of this Vote always takes up a great deal of time when the Estimates are in Committee; and for that reason, also, I think the Government would do well to abolish it. It always gives rise to half-an-hour's discussion, and half-an-hour represents the tenth part of a Sitting; and I think it is hard that the Committee spend that time every year in protesting against a custom which does no good, while it certainly does encourage blacklegs and gambling. This has been the immemorial result of horse-racing. For my own part, I never subscribe to the local horse race funds; my custom being to send a civil refusal in reply to all applications and circulars, which I put into the waste-paper basket. I practise what I preach; and as I do not wish to put the Committee to the trouble of dividing, if the Government will undertake to withdraw the Estimate next year, I will not carry my Motion to a Division; but, if not, I shall certainly take that course.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item F—for Queen's Plates—be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Biggar.*)

COLONAL NOLAN (Galway, N.): The hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) has made an amusing speech; but while he has been delivering it I have been exercising my mind to discover what means of locomotion he will leave us in Ireland when he has carried out all his views on that subject. A few days ago he objected to railways and tramways, and now he objects to our encouraging the breeding of horses. If the breed of horses is destroyed we should have to use donkey carts, which in course of time my hon. Friend will be objecting to if his Amendment is carried. I hope, however, he will take a more sensible course than that which he seems bent upon. It is an unfortunate thing that the Vote for the Queen's Plates for Ireland, unlike the English Plates, which are given out of the Queen's Purse, come on for discussion on these Votes, because the effect of that is that discussion is raised not on the main, but on a side question. The effect of giving this money in the case of Ireland is quite different from its effect in England, where the Queen's Plates are a mere blot on account of the enormous amount of added money. On the other hand, I believe that in Ireland this money is just enough to turn the scale. In my opinion, the encouragement of horse-breeding is nearly as important from a military point of view as the procuring of recruits; and if you take away this £1,500 a-year—as I am informed by men well acquainted with the subject—we shall lose the whole of our breed of racers in Ireland. I think it is a great pity that Ireland is shut out from English races. The country has a great many natural advantages in its soil for the breeding and training of horses in the winter; and it would, in my opinion, be of great advantage if the people of Ireland were enabled to enter into the English system of racing, which has made this country famous throughout the world. But I would warn the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) against taking advice, on the subject of the local distribution of plates, too much from racing men. These races give an immense amount of amusement to the people in Ireland—who, there is no doubt, are very fond of them—and it would be of much greater advantage that they should be run at places like Galway, for instance, than at the Curragh. There are not many of the people of the country who go to the Curragh meetings, as will be seen if you deduct the men from the Camp and those who make racing a profession; and therefore I say you will be giving the people a much greater amount of amusement by distributing the Plates over other districts. I consider that under the present arrangement it is a great shame that only one Plate should be given to Connaught instead of three, which would be a much fairer apportionment. But there is a special blot on the system of distributing the Queen's Plates, which, instead of being dealt with by the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary for Ireland—as I should be quite willing for them to be—are allocated, I believe, by an officer of Her Majesty's Household.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: They are allocated by the Master of the Horse in Ireland.

COLONEL NOLAN: Then the system has been changed. The difference is merely one of date. I am, however, glad that the Government have had the inconvenience of the old system brought to their notice, and will conclude my remarks by expressing a hope that the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) will not divide the Committee on his Motion, and that the Vote for this small sum of money will be agreed to.

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.): I think this question affects the whole country. Here is the sum of £1,500 or £1,600 coming annually out of the pockets of the taxpayers, and handed over to be raced for as Queen's Plates in Ireland. It is so much money worse than wasted; and, therefore, these are grants which I think ought not to be continued. It is said that this was originally intended for the purpose of promoting the breed of horses in Ireland; but looking at the fact that it does nothing of the kind, and that many of the horses that win these Plates come from England, I think the system should be abolished. In Australia, New Zealand, India, China, Japan, and the United States, where horse-racing flourishes, not one sixpence of public money goes to support horse-racing. It is in this country alone that the public money is applied to such a purpose. I therefore intend to vote with the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar), if the hon. Gentleman and myself go into the Lobby alone. I do not see that there is any great advantage to a country if it does succeed in getting a horse to run a race in a quarter of a second less than it has been run in before. The chief requirement in Ireland is horses for everyday use; and, as this Vote in no way tends to supply this want, I shall vote with the hon. Member for West Cavan.

Mr. HERMON-HODGE (Lancashire, Accrington): I wish to assure hon. Members opposite that they have the sympathy of Members on these Benches in their wish for the better distribution of the Queen's Plates in Ireland. I cannot understand how any Member can get up and advocate a course so injurious and so calculated to hamper the breed of horses in that country as that of abolishing these Plates. When a horse like "Bendigo" is produced in Ireland, and comes over here and wins a good race, others of the same kind are sought for immediately, and thousands of pounds are brought into the country in consequence; and that has occurred over and over again. I will not detain the Committee longer than to express a hope that there will be an inquiry into the manner of the distribution of this money before next year.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I would appeal to my hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar), with whom on all questions of economy I am happy to vote, to reconsider his decision on this subject, because, as far as this money is concerned, we ought not to have the slightest objection to its expenditure in Ireland; and if the system is at present defective, there is no reason why it should not be amended. I object to 10 of the Queen's Plates being run for at the Curragh, where only two or three horses run, and carry off the whole of them. The effect of the present system is that the whole of the benefit of the Plates goes to two or three persons who train horses for the special purpose, while there is not the slightest advantage to the class of persons generally who use horses in Ireland. I think it would be very much better if the money we are now asked for were given for stud-horses instead of for race-horses. Then, again, the money is given for races on the flat, whereas the only branch of racing in which Irish horses excel is steeple-chasing and across-country work. I suggest, then, that the money should be given for the purpose I have indicated, because, by that means, it would do 10 times as much good as is done by handing it over to blacklegs and sharpers who frequent the races in Ireland.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.): I think, if this money is granted to Ireland at all, it should be given in the manner suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenny), for, as the money is applied now, it is of no use whatever to Ireland, where everything that is patronized by Royalty goes to the wall. I remember there used to be in Ireland a good breed of hunters—indeed, there was nothing better of its kind than the old blood-hunter—but these, like the Irish people, have been exterminated. I shall certainly support the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) on the Division which he has announced his intention of taking, and I regret that the hon. Member for Northampton is not present, with whom I voted on a former occasion against this charge. I think sport has done nothing for Ireland except impoverish the landlords, who, in turn, take it out of the tenants.

Mr. BIGGAR: I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) to say whether there is not a stringent law against betting on horses? That is a criminal offence, and I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is going to give the countenance of the Government to a system which encourages gambling in Ireland?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I see no necessity for gambling in connection with horse-racing.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 23; Noes 116: Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 437.) [8 P.M.]

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolution to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £25,967, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in Dublin and London, and Subordinate Departments."

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): Sir, this Vote is one upon which many questions have always been raised; and I do not think the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) will be surprised that on the present occasion it should lead to some considerable discussion. We have to complain—I think it will be admitted with some reason—of the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant discharges his duties. The right hon. Gentleman has set up an altogether novel practice. I am not prepared to deny that he has had a very great burden thrown upon him. I will go further, and say he assumed his Office during one of the most critical periods of the history of the country. I do not think that he himself realizes the burden which is thrown upon his shoulders as much as he might feel it, because, however intensely it may press upon him, I have never disguised from myself that he fails to realize the extraordinary position of Ireland at the present time. Now, that is speaking generally; but, speaking departmentally, what is the action of the right hon. Gentleman? When the right hon. Gentleman came into Office last March, he succeeded a Gentleman of very great experience in the management of Irish affairs—Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—who had held the Office of Chief Secretary from 1874 to 1876-7, and who, after having been Leader of the House, on the suggestion, apparently, of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), again took the Office of Chief Secretary. The policy of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, as we understood it in Ireland, was to endeavour by every means in his power to prevent evictions; and I must say that the term of Office of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—[*Cries of* "Order, order!"] I never personally raised my voice against his method of conducting Irish Business. I can conceive Sir Michael Hicks-Beach—[*Cries of* "Order, order!"] I am perfectly in Order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I understand, Mr. Courtney, it is always allowable, under circumstances of this kind, to speak of a Gentleman by name. It was the course adopted in reference to my hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), when he was not present. It was then that the precedent was established of speaking of hon. Gentlemen who were absent from the House for any considerable length of time by name. If there is any objection——

The CHAIRMAN: I am not aware of any such precedent; it is not within my memory. Certainly, it is quite foreign to the practice of the House to speak of Members of the House by name.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: My hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) was never spoken of at that time in any other way than by name. I am strictly conforming to precedent. If anyone will refer to the reports of the debates, he will find in them the names of Mr. Parnell, Mr. O'Kelly, Mr. J. Dillon, Mr. Sexton, and of other hon. Gentlemen absent from the House for a long period. The practice was to speak of such hon. Gentlemen as I am speaking of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach); but I will not press the point further. I was saying that, so far as I was concerned, I never felt able to criticize the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman with any great stringency. When the right hon. Gentleman departed from Office, owing to a difficulty with the Cabinet upon the question of judicial rents, he was able to put forward a very deplorable ground, the ground of some unfortunate disorder or affliction, and no one more than I regret such a misfortune happening to a frank and loyal opponent. We have had experience, therefore, of that right hon. Gentleman during my short time in the House; we have had experience of the right hon. Gentleman the present Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke) as Chief Secretary; we have had experience, too, in the Office of Chief Secretary, of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), and of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), and before then we had experience of the late Mr. Forster. That is to say, that in the course of seven years we have had something like six or seven different Chief Secretaries for Ireland, and the present incumbent of the Office (Mr. A. J. Balfour) is the first who has conducted Irish affairs in the way he has done. During his tenure in Office he has only gone over to Ireland two or three times, and then only for a very brief period. He has, therefore, been at the mercy of gentlemen at the Irish Office in London. He has had no previous experience of Ireland, so far as I know. He is a Scottish landlord, and before he was told off to administer Irish affairs he was the Secretary for Scotland. If an Irishman were appointed Secretary for Scotland, what a farce it would be; would not the thing be ridiculous, and would not Scotch Members on both sides of the House cry out at the atrocity of appointing a Member, who knew nothing whatever about Scotland, to deal with Scottish affairs? Yet Scotland is a country where landlord and tenant meet together, and where the laws are fairly administered. Suppose an Irishman, without any experience of England, were appointed Home Secretary, what at an outcry there would be. Besides other qualifications, the right hon. Gentleman has that of being the nephew of his uncle—that is thought sufficient ground for promoting him to the Office of Chief Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman makes a boast of his ignorance, and on the ground of his ignorance claims consideration at our hands. I think that, so far as that is concerned, the right hon. Gentleman has no claim whatever for consideration at our hands. If he is an ignorant man — speaking so far as Ireland is concerned — having no acquaintance with the country, he should have been the last man to have adopted the means of dealing with Irish affairs that he has adopted. Now, what has he done? We know that, although much time is necessarily consumed in the consideration of Irish affairs to what is considered the exclusion of English and Scotch affairs, the whole Session would not be too long to devote every year to Irish matters. In fact, the only opportunity we have of raising questions in regard to canals, bridges, drainage, piers and harbours, or the actions of the police, and soldiers, and landlords, is by Question. All this Session we have been shut out from raising affairs except by Question. We raised them, of course, in the debates as they arose on the Coercion Bill and the Land Bill; but we are obliged to deal with such affairs at such times as suits the Irish Government; therefore, Sir, the great outlet and safety-valve in this House for Irish Members has hitherto been Questions. Now, if there is anything calculated to educate even the most ignorant man upon Irish affairs, it is the perusal of the Questions put from day to day to Ministers. What has been the action of the right hon. Gentleman? I do not wish to say anything personally offensive to the right hon. Gentleman; but I must say that his desertion of his post appears to me to wear exactly the same aspect as if a sentry were to throw down his gun and go to his bed at a time when he ought to be on duty. The right hon. Gentleman has taken a course which no other Irish Secretary has ever taken; and let me point out one great advantage he has. He is a young man; he is physically strong; and I may say, as a young man myself, he has plenty of audacity. That being so, he has a great advantage over gentlemen like the late Mr. Forster, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman). What has been his course of action? He has appointed—it was apparently his selection —the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) as his *alter ego*. We know there were many aspirants to the post; we know that the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) thought he was well in the running. I do not know what objections there were to him; he is a Scotchman, and therefore I should have thought he fulfilled all the conditions.

Then, there were hon. Gentlemen opposite who aspired to the post. There was the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson); he is a Militia Orangeman; and, therefore, I should have said he had a large claim upon the Government in reference to the appointment. But what did the Government do? On the initiative of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland they appointed to deal with Irish affairs the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman). In the first instance, let me point out that we are now left entirely at the discretion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet, or, if we are not left at his discretion, we are left at the discretion of the clerks who write out the replies which he gives to us. Is that a mode of dealing with Irish questions to be tolerated? We are told that Ireland is the problem of British statesmen; but fancy the right hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Thanet working out such a problem when he can hardly work out a sum in proportion! Fancy the great issues in regard to Ireland being entrusted to a gentleman of the calibre of the right hon. and gallant Member for the Isle of Thanet, who began his career, apparently, by being sentenced to three or four months' imprisonment for rioting and assaulting the police in Cremorne Gardens! This is the Government which boasts of its adhesion to law and order, and its first act upon the initiative of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland is to appoint a released convict—[*Cries of* "Order, order!"] That is what he is.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. T. M. HEALY: If you, Mr. Courtney, can suggest what will be a proper inclusive term to apply to a man who has been sent to the treadmill for assault, I am prepared to adopt such Parliamentary description. It is all very well to tell people like the Irish people to have regard for law and order—indeed, you have just passed a Bill to make punishable assaults on police and bailiffs; but I should like to know where the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would have been if the Crimes Act had been in force in his young days? Last night we had an exhibition of the spirit in which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman deals with Irish affairs. Reference was made to two men named Weldon and McHugh, who were charged with an offence, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman told a very interesting anecdote concerning the man Weldon. He got up at that Table and admitted that he went to Mr. Forster and told him that if he did not get Weldon out of the country he would shoot Weldon. Look how that comes out in the English papers. It was suppressed in *The Times*—he must have sent word to get it knocked out of the report—at any rate, it does not appear in *The Times* this morning. The English public have thus been deprived of a little piece of evidence showing what manner of man the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is. But the question will be brought up, I imagine; when we address the Irish people in the coming winter we shall certainly refer to this interesting historical observation of the present Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman told Mr. Forster that if Weldon was not got out of the country, the first time he met him he would shoot him. Such is the calibre and mental condition of the Gentleman you have appointed to deal with Irish affairs.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I am bound to interfere, as I was in the Chair when the observation was made, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is not at present here to reply for himself. The version of the statement of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman given by the hon. and learned Member may be quite correct; but it does not at all correspond with what I heard.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Of course, if you say that, Sir, I am quite willing to accept your statement. I observe the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is not here; but, of course, he is within call, and it is the duty of the Government to send for him. This is a serious matter, and will be raised, I can assure the Government, in Ireland in season and out of season. When we are liable to be imprisoned for six months or three months for offences under the Crimes Act just as your Resident Magistrates may order, we shall not forget in our speeches to point out the spirit of the remark of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. As I heard the remark the right hon. and gallant Gentleman told Mr. Forster that Weldon was about to shoot him, and that if he saw Weldon he would have the first shot. Whatever the remark was, it is excluded from *The Times*, and *The Times*, which is worked in concert with the Government in these matters, has deprived us from reading what the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has said; and as *Hansard's* reports are submitted to Members before publication, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman will, no doubt, score out the particular passage of his speech to which I have referred. I did not look in the other London papers to see if the statement was recorded; but, if not, and if it is excluded from *Hansard*, we have only our memories to rely upon. Perhaps later on the right hon. and gallant Gentleman will tell us what he really did say. At any rate, this is the spirit of the Irish landlord whom you have employed to do duty for the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is a mere sham. So far as policy is concerned, he is a mere shadow; he does not exist. Because he knows nothing about Ireland he is bound to take his views from his right hon. and gallant Colleague (Colonel King-Harman), whom if the Government did not believe to be a suitable man they would not have appointed. No more offensive appointment has ever been made. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman, apart from his Cremorne days, was hand and glove—perhaps the Government will send for him unless he is dining—the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was hand and glove with all the Fenians of Roscommon and Longford. He stood for Longford and for the City of Dublin as a Home Ruler; he was Secretary of the Home Rule Conference of 1883, and he never denied that his first election address to the constituency he stood for was written by Mr. Patrick Egan, the Secretary of the Irish Land League. He was also, I believe, an old chum of Mr. P. J. Sheridan, and used him during several election campaigns. This is the Gentleman who is appointed by the Government to stand between us and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. Now, take the mere departmental effect of this appointment. The other day a tenant on the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's estate in the County of Roscommon was prosecuted for trespass. He had cut turf, and a day or two ago I asked if it was true that the turf was cut, that a summons for trespass was issued against the tenant, and that this summons was tried before the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's agent, and the agent of another local landlord. These men fined the man, although the question of title was raised. The case was carried up to the Queen's Bench, where the order was quashed; but the Court would not allow the tenant costs, so that the result was that, although the Queen's Bench quashed the illegal order of the magistrate, the tenant was put to upwards of £30 costs. I put a Question on the subject to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who answered it. Of course, it would not have been decent for the Question to be answered by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman; but what hope had I of getting a proper answer when the landlord incriminated had a hand in the concoction or preparation of the answer? The other day I had a complaint to make of a bailiff on the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's estate in Longford. This man went round with a revolver to intimidate the wife of an evicted tenant. I did not put a Question about the matter—what was the good of doing so? What was the use of putting a Question about the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, and getting an answer from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman himself? That would have been a very pretty state of things. The grievances and hardships of our country can only be brought home to the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary by the Questions we address to him, and yet the right hon. Gentleman very rarely allows them to impinge on his mind. The Questions are sent over to Dublin, and the answers to them are drawn up by clerks. The answers were read out at the Table of the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and his Assistant (Colonel King-Harman). This, I say, is a state of things in this House, so far as Ireland is concerned, which is revolutionary. No other Minister acts in the way the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary acts. The right hon. Gentleman in this way shows his disdain for the Irish people, to do which his Relative the hon.

Member for Central Leeds (Mr. Gerald Balfour) says he took the Office of Chief Secretary.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: He did not say so.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: We say he did.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Courtney, I rise to Order. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Leeds (Mr. Gerald Balfour) had distinctly denied in the House that he ever made such a statement. I beg to ask you, Sir, whether it is in Order to repeat the accusation in the absence of the hon. Gentleman?

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, if the hon. Member for Central Leeds has distinctly denied that he made such a statement, the hon. and learned Member for North Longford is not in Order in repeating it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I can only say that a Member of this House informed me that he heard the hon. Member for Central Leeds (Mr. Gerald Balfour) make the statement that his brother accepted the Office of Irish Secretary, although he despised the Irish soul.

The CHAIRMAN: That observation having been denied, I cannot justify the hon. and learned Member in repeating the statement.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Very well, Mr. Courtney. The Government have, however, adopted the policy of putting forward the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet as their mouthpiece in this House. Now, we are to have during the autumn and Recess a time of extraordinary difficulty and liveliness. In connection with the suppression of the National League the tenantry will call meetings to consider what action should be taken. Who will be the Adviser of the Government as to the suppression of these meetings? The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet—a gentleman who went to the North of Ireland, and declared that the National League was a disloyal and illegal organization, and that its meetings should not be allowed; a gentleman who was at the head of the Orange meeting at Dungannon, which would have led to a breach of the peace only for an overwhelming force of cavalry and infantry being there; a gentleman who went there as a magistrate, forsooth, to prevent the right of public meeting being exercised; a member of the Orange organization! I confess I do not think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is in the least bigoted—he does not care whether a man is a Catholic or Protestant. I have never noticed that he has any of that Orange virus which is so conspicuous in others; he lives amongst Catholic people, and he knows them well. He is a political Orangeman, and, as such, he is a member of a sworn secret society. He is so in violation of all the declarations of previous Governments, beginning with 1834, when Regulations were passed precluding any member of a sworn secret society, working by signs and symbols, from holding Office under Her Majesty. Although I may be told that the advice of Lord Napier was taken as to the reconstitution of the Orange Society, and although the excuse has been made in the House that since its reconstitution the society has been placed on a basis of legality, I can only say that long subsequent to that—about 1854, when Lord Palmerston was in Office — Maziere O'Brady, then Chancellor of Ireland, wrote and addressed a Circular to the Lords Lieutenants of counties in which he directed that no member of the Orange Society should be allowed to retain the Commission of the Peace. This was long after the Orange organization had been placed on a so-called basis of legality by its reconstitution. If it is right to be a member of a landlords' secret society, why should it not be right to be a member of a tenants' secret society? If it is right for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to take the oath of Orangeism and be indoctrinated in the mystic passwords and other tomfoolery Orangemen indulge in in order to safeguard the secrets of their Order, why should not Ribbonmen be allowed to take oaths and have their secret signs and passwords? The landlords have their rents to protect; but the Ribbonmen have their wives and families to protect. If I had to join a secret society I would much sooner join the Ribbonmen than the Orangemen. So far as the oath-bound nature of the societies go they are on a parity; but, so far from there being any parity between them as to bloodshed, for every murder the Ribbonmen have committed the Orangemen have committed 500. Wherever the Orange Society has gone its path has been stained with the blood of innocent men. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman is now representing the Irish Government on the Treasury Bench, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary having gone away, being unequal to the task. I think that when Lord Salisbury was appointing an Irish Secretary it would have been more frank in him to have appointed the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. I would far rather have to deal with him directly than through — as it were — a glass darkly, as we have at present. I think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has the instincts of an Irishman; that he desires, as far as he can, to further the material prosperity of Ireland so long as it does not interfere with landlordism. But at present the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is neither one thing nor the other; he is neither Irish Secretary nor the Under Secretary. He does not even draw a salary; and I fail to see what advantage there is in the present system. Two men are not wanted; besides, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has never been allowed to intervene in debate since a famous debate we had in this House. As the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is now present, it is only fair I should repeat what I have said concerning him. I said that as I understood his remark about the man Weldon it was this—that he had gone to Mr. Forster and told him that he believed Weldon meant to shoot him, but that if he met Weldon he would shoot Weldon. That is the statement I understood the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to make. I went on to point out that nothing whatever in regard to Weldon appears in the report of the remarks of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman in *The Times* of this morning, from which I draw the inference that as *The Times* was the Government paper the remark was suppressed at the instigation of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman himself. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman will have an opportunity of correcting that observation if he chooses to do so; he will be able to explain himself how the matter stands. I have expressed, as well as I can, my objection to the system of government in Ireland carried on by what O'Connell called "a shave-beggar principle." The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary relegates most important duties to a member of a sworn secret society. I have had the society's rules in my hand, and have seen how John So-and-so was expelled for marrying a Papist. This society has been responsible for much of the turmoil and bloodshed which has occurred in Ireland—in Ulster, at any rate, for the last 100 years; and I think it would be franker on the part of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to withdraw from that society. The Irish people would certainly consider it a mark of respect—I do not say to their prejudices, but to their feelings—if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman were to withdraw from the Orange Society. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman must remember that a great many people in Ireland have not forgotten his own Home Rule days, and that there are some people in Ireland who still think he is a Home Ruler. Whether he is a Home Ruler or not, I think the Irish people would appreciate his action if he were to withdraw from an oath-bound society. You are about to suppress the only Constitutional organization the Irish people have. Naturally, the Irish people will not allow themselves to go undefended. If they cannot meet openly they will meet in secret. If they cannot defend their farms by public organization and by Constitutional methods they will defend them anyhow. Human nature being what it is, if the landlords put the pressure of what is called law on the people, the people will endeavour to meet and counteract them by the only means open to them. I believe it to be just as legitimate for the people to adopt their methods of warfare as it is for the Government to adopt theirs. You adopt your methods, and you are able to get them sanctioned by Act of Parliament. We do not regard Acts of Parliament, passed as they are in this House by means I will not characterize, passed by a Parliament whose decree we have never respected and never shall. That being so, I invite the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to place himself, to some extent, within the pale of decency by forsaking this secret society to which he belongs, which has the stain of murder upon it. In the opinion of most of the Irish people the Orange Society is an organization of aggression, of bigotry, of violence, and of destruction; and, no matter how innocent his connection may be with it, there is no excuse for him continuing his membership. His appointment was an outrage upon the Irish people. It was the appointment of a renegade to a position of power over the people; it was the appointment of a landlord to an arbitrary position over the tenants; it was the appointment of a rack-renter, a man whose rents have been reduced 20, 30, 40, and, I believe, in some cases 50 per cent, over people whose main struggle has been a struggle for fair rent; it was the appointment of a man who, if you please, was to carry out law and order, seeing that he himself had been convicted under shameful and deplorable circumstances in connection with a Cremorne riot many years ago. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman could atone to some extent by his action in Office for his appointment; but that does not relieve the Government from the disgrace of having appointed him. I say that his appointment was a deplorable appointment. He may improve his position by his action in this House. I have been happy to recognize that recently he has abated to some extent the offensiveness with which he replied to the most harmless Questions addressed to him from this side of the House. The position of a Minister is not necessarily the position of a combatant. A Minister is a Minister for the whole people and not for a particular Party, as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman occasionally understands his Office. At first he made himself the Minister of the Orange faction; but he is now beginning to recognize the fact that he is the Minister of the people at large. But whether he does recognize that fact or not it does not relieve the Government from the disgrace and stigma of the appointment, nor does it relieve the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland of a want of courage and want of heart which induced him to appoint the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to his present position. It is the business of the Irish Secretary to stand his ground. You can read every day in *The Times* the false and wretched saying that the Irish are a bad people to run away from. I do not know what that proverb means, except it means a sneer at a people who, in addition to robbing, you find it easy to vilify. At any rate, the right hon. Gentleman the Irish Secretary runs away. I do not think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland would run away from anybody. At all events, he would not run away from Weldon, who was prepared to shoot him. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has installed in his place a Gentleman wholly objectionable to us, a Gentleman whose relations with his tenants are of a most deplorable kind, and who frankly confessed before the Land Commissioners two years ago that no landlord in Ireland was on worse terms with his tenants than he was. That I think was a deplorable statement, and that statement, coupled with the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's statement concerning the man Weldon, will be dealt with in the coming autumn. We shall ask the Irish people to have regard to the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, and to say that a Government so constituted cannot merit their respect, and as one which ought not to be allowed to remain a day in existence, having power over the lives and liberties of any civilized people.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I have no wish to detain the Committee long; I was brought in from my dinner, hearing that the hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. T. M. Healy) had, with his usual courtesy, taken the opportunity of my absence to make a violent attack upon me.

MR. T. M. HEALY: May I ask if that observation is in Order? I did not take the opportunity of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's absence. I was compelled to get up, because the Vote was called on. Had it been an hour earlier or an hour later I should have got up had the right hon. and gallant Gentleman been Jupiter or Saturn.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I feel bound to say that the hon. and learned Gentleman suggested that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman should be sent for.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I am very glad the hon. and learned Gentleman did suggest I should be sent for. I am sorry I was not here to hear all the remarks of the hon. and learned Member; but I do not know whether the accusations of the hon. and learned Member are entirely in accordance with the instincts of an Irishman and the decencies of debate. The Committee can form its own opinion upon that. The first point upon which I understand the hon. and learned Gentleman thought fit to censure my conduct was with regard to a matter which occurred 27 years ago. I do not in the least mean to deny that. I did get into a row 27 years ago; but I dare say many of us were much more foolish 27 years ago than we are at present. I do not believe that any man is very much the worse for having got into a boyish scrape. There was nothing disgraceful or cowardly in it, and if I got into a scrape at all it was through defending my friends. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman referred to the statement I made yesterday. I understand that the hon. and learned Member said that I stated yesterday that I went to Mr. Forster and told him if Weldon was not removed I would shoot him. What I intended to state, and believe I stated, was that Mr. Forster had told me that he had information that Weldon was employed with the intention of shooting me. I told Mr. Forster that, that being the case, if I met Weldon on the road I would shoot him—that I would have the first shot. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) intimated yesterday that I ought to have let Weldon have first shot. Do you think I am such a fool as that? Mr. Forster wanted to surround me with police, and he cautioned me not to go home. Do you think I was going to be cur enough even to slink away or let myself be surrounded and dogged about by police? Do you think I was fool enough to let a man I knew have the first shot at me? Not a bit of it. I was not fool enough to be caught, and I am not now. The hon. and learned Member then went to a matter which touches me very much more, which touches my honour and what reputation I have to lose. In consequence of the remarks not having appeared in *The Times*—probably they were not uttered high enough to be heard in the Gallery—he had the effrontery to insinuate I had some communication with the reporters, and had got them to suppress the words which I had uttered. I throw that back in the hon. and learned Gentleman's face with scorn. It was an unwarrantable, calumnious, and abominable insinuation to make.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The right hon. and gallant Gentleman is, no doubt, speaking under great provocation; but I must ask him to observe the rules of language in this House.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Mr. Courtney, I bow to your decision. I am sorry I was not here when these remarks were made. I should have claimed your protection from such remarks if I had been. But, as I was not protected in my absence, I thought I might have been allowed to express some natural indignation at an accusation which deeply touches my honour and deeply affects my feelings. I consider that any hon. Member of this House who would utter words, and who would then send up or in any way communicate with the reporters in order to have those words suppressed, would be a mean and dastardly coward; and a man who brings an accusation of mean and dastardly conduct against an hon. Member of this House I think is—I am sorry to say, Sir, I cannot use the language which I think I might use.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Go on.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Well, I think that is the chief point I have to object to. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman also accused me, I understand, of having been a friend of a murderer—P. J. Sheridan. The hon. and learned Gentleman, in my opinion, knows perfectly well that that statement is not true.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I must point out that it is a violation of the Rules of this House to say that any hon. Member makes a statement that he knows to be not true. The right hon. and gallant Member must withdraw.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I withdraw it; but I think the hon. and learned Gentleman, before making such an accusation as that, should have taken pains to ascertain whether it was true. Now, I will tell the Committee plainly the entire nature of my acquaintance with P. J. Sheridan. I saw him twice in my life, and I had a conversation with him once. The first time I ever saw him was when, in 1877, I canvassed the County Sligo.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: He canvassed for you.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: He did not. What he may have done without my knowledge I cannot tell; but he never canvassed for me with my approval. I saw him next in the town of Tubbercurry, where I canvassed every house. There were two public-houses in the town, in each of which a certain number of men were; and in the ordinary course of the canvass I visited Sheridan's house, and spoke to him and his wife and the voters there assembled. I had no more to do with him than I had with the other publican at the end of the town. My next acquaintance with Mr. Sheridan was when I contested County Sligo a second time, and when I was opposed and defeated by the hon. Gentleman who now represents West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). In the middle of my canvass, and when matters were pressing, and it became apparent to me that the probability was that I should be defeated, a letter was brought to me at my hotel in Sligo, signed by P. J. Sheridan, offering that if a certain sum of money was paid to him he would come forward as a Nationalist, and so split that interest. I handed the letter to my brother, who was in the room, and said that I had been told the fellow was a rascal; but I did not think he was such a scoundrel as this. I threw the letter in the fire, and from that time to this I have had neither part, parcel, or lot with P. J. Sheridan, good, bad, or indifferent. Now, I hope the hon. and learned Member will not again repeat the calumnious statements he has made to-night. The hon. and learned Gentleman was then, in my presence, very witty in his remarks about my attendance at the Dungannon meeting.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I also said, if you wish to know, that Patrick Egan had written your address.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I was not aware of that; and I am very glad to have the opportunity of saying that the statement is absolutely unfounded, and as false as the other statements the hon. and learned Gentleman has made.

MR. T. M. HEALY: You admitted it in your County Dublin canvass.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I did nothing of the kind.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I have told the hon. and learned Gentleman already that it is contrary to the Rules of the House to contradict an hon. Member in this way—to say that another hon. Member is making a statement which is untrue.

MR. T. M. HEALY: He confessed it in his County Dublin canvass.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is impossible to enter into the question of justification —it is a violation of the Rules of this House. I must call upon the hon. and learned Gentleman to withdraw.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Very well, Sir.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I do not know whether the hon. and learned Gentleman has withdrawn the accusation?

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. and learned Member withdraw?

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am perfectly willing to withdraw any statement which is incorrect; but it is incorrect——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. and learned Gentleman will appreciate exactly what I have said. I have told him that the observation is irregular, and contrary to the Rules of the House. I enter into no question of its correctness or otherwise.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Well, Sir, independently of what I think of Patrick Egan—whose character I will not dwell upon in his absence—let me say I do not claim to be a man of great literary capacity, or of any particular talent; but I do claim to be able to write an ordinary election address without seeking the assistance of a miller's clerk.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): Patrick Egan corrected the proof of your address, and I was standing by when he did it.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I must ask the hon. Member to apologize for that interruption.

MR. D. SULLIVAN: Very well, Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must not apologize in that perfunctory fashion. It is a violation of the Rules of the House, which cannot be permitted; and I call upon him to withdraw.

MR. D. SULLIVAN: Very well, Sir; I do so.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Mr. Courtney, I was speaking of the hon. and learned Gentleman's reference as regarded the Dungannon meeting. Well, I did go to the meeting. I did walk at the head of a body of loyal men into Dungannon, and I made a speech there, and when my speech was over I walked into the square; and the hon. and learned Member (Mr. T. M. Healy), if he had any sense of decency—I beg pardon——

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Go on.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: If he had any sense of gratitude, I do not think he would have spoken about me at Dungannon, for if I had not been at Dungannon on that occasion I very much question whether the hon. and learned Member would have been here now. While the meeting was going on, the hon. and learned Member walked out of his hotel towards the post office. He was recognized about three-quarters of the way across by some of the men in the outskirts of the crowd, and they made a rush for him——

Mr. T. M. HEALY: They were told from the platform to do it.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I do not blame the hon. and learned Member for it; but he made a rush——

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I did nothing of the kind.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Well, the hon. and learned Member proceeded to the post office, and he was very nearly being caught, and I got hold of two men who were behind him by their necks, and pulled them back. I said—"For God's sake, do not touch him." They were strangers to me, and they turned on me in a savage manner, believing, I suppose, I was a friend of the hon. and learned Gentleman. I would not have seen him or anyone else ill-used by a body of men equal to 10 to one. I did my best to prevent the hon. and learned Gentleman from being maltreated, and I would do the same again under similar circumstances. I think the hon. and learned Gentleman must know perfectly well—as the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) must know—that when he was at the Portrush Station he was in considerable danger, and that his assailants were kept off by one of the leading Orangemen of the place. I certainly thought that I should have met with some gratitude for what I did at Dungannon. The hon. and learned Member taunts me about Home Rule. The hon. and learned Member must be perfectly aware that I spoke my sentiments as boldly and as plainly then as I do now. I took up the cry of Home Rule when it was not a popular cry. I stood by it as long as I could. I stood by it in good and evil repute, and as long as I thought there was a possibility of Ireland being raised from its then condition by the Home Rule as laid down by the late Mr. Butt. But when I found the cause was swamped by men who killed it, and have destroyed the good name of Irish Nationality, I abandoned the cause. I was not ashamed of my principles. Neither loss of friends, loss of money, nor loss of reputation deterred me; nor will the jeers, the annoyance, or the threats of hon. Members opposite prevent me from doing what I know to be true, what I believe to be right, and what I intend to persevere in.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I think it is only right to state that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is entirely mistaken. I never knew he had any connection with the interference with me or with my hon. Friend the Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor) at Dungannon. The motion to attack from the platform, where I saw the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, was made by the Rev. R. R. Kane. When I was going through the crowd, that rev. gentleman said—"There is Healy passing; go and show him how you can cheer for the Queen," and the mob turned upon me. I was not aware that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was in the crowd, or that he did anything to prevent me being attacked. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman has entirely failed to deal with my chief accusation against him—namely, that he was appointed by the Government who knew that he had boasted he was a member of the Orange organization, and who knew what the principles of that organization were. The point of my observation was that he went to the Dungannon meeting and declared there against the liberty of public speech, and of public meeting, and of public organization, and that it was because of his opposition to the rights of the people that he was appointed to his present position. With regard to the Cremorne business, no doubt what I alluded to did occur when he was a boy; but perhaps Sheridan would say the same thing. Perhaps half the people who have been hanged, drawn, and quartered, did similar things when they were boys; but that is no excuse, and did not save them from being hanged. I say it was a disgrace for the Government to have appointed the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to his present position, and that it is impossible to expect the people of Ireland to respect law and order when the Government appoint such a notorious law-breaker to such an Office as that of Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. We know what Cremorne was at the time the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was a frequenter of the place. We know that he was convicted of assaulting the police, in spite of all the attempts made to get him off; and it is no answer to my assertion that such a Gentleman should not have been appointed by the Government for the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to say that what occurred at Cremorne was but a foolish and boyish freak. It is not upon the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that his defence lies. He has defended himself; but I attack the appointment. I attack the Government.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I thought the hon. and learned Member called me a released convict.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I certainly described the appointment as the appointment of a released convict, and so it was. It was nothing else. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman was a convict.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Gentleman is surely a sufficient master of himself to be able to conduct his speech without constantly indulging in irritating and—as I think, too frequently—incorrect statements. It is not a correct legal description to speak of a person who has undergone the experience which he has described as a released convict. It is not correct, according to the statement of the hon. and learned Gentleman himself, to speak of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman as a frequenter of the place; it is not correct to speak of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman as a notorious law-breaker. These are all points of aggravation, and a want of correctness, which I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman will not persevere in.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The word, "convict," Mr. Courtney, no doubt, would be more accurately applied to a person who has undergone penal servitude; but there is no convenient English term to describe a person in the position of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, and in its absence I used the term that occurred to my mind. I was referring to the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman as one which the Government ought not to have made in view of his position. They had plenty of English Members to choose from, and they had plenty of Irish Members to choose from. They knew, in addition, that he was a member of the Orange Society, a society that is at war with the dearest and most cherished convictions of the Irish people—they knew all this, and yet they appointed him to his present position. They appointed him, knowing that he was a deserter from the Home Rule movement, having been Secretary to the Home Rule Conference in 1883. I blame the Government for that appointment; I blame the right hon. and gallant Gentleman for his previous action, and for his connection with the Orange organization; I blame the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland for permitting the right hon. and gallant Gentleman—landlord and Orangeman as he is—to come between us and a British official, who is supposed to be impartial in the discharge of his duties. I say it is not proper that questions of a most important and delicate character should be dealt with at that Table by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. I give him credit, as an Irishman, for the absence of bigotry. I do not believe he is a bigoted Orangeman. I give him credit for having a desire to promote the material prosperity of Ireland apart from landlordism. But these are only two items of his position. I blame the right hon. and gallant Gentleman for the expressions he used to Mr. Forster respecting Weldon, and I re-assert that it is a remarkable thing that the expression should have been excluded from the report in the chief organ of the Government. He says he did not get it excluded from that report. I fully believe what he says, and I express my regret for having made the assertion. But I say it is a remarkable thing that a statement so vital to the position of the Government, and so vital to the position of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman as a Member of the Government, should have been suppressed by the Government organ. To me, at any rate, it appears as if the gentleman who conducts *The Times*, or the reporters who manage matters for *The Times*, know better what is right to be said from the Government Bench than certain Members of the

Administration themselves. I cannot move the reduction of the Vote so far as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is concerned, because I am told that he has got no salary. We have got our own opinion as to whether he has got any salary or not.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Mr. Courtney, I should like to ask you whether it is in Order for the hon. and learned Member to insinuate that I am sitting here under false pretences? As I think every hon. Member in the House except himself knows, I am aiding to the best of my ability without receiving one farthing of emolument in any way. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether the hon. and learned Member is in Order in insinuating that I am telling a falsehood when I say I am receiving no salary?

The CHAIRMAN: I am bound to say that the hon. and learned Member (Mr. T. M. Healy) is out of Order; and I must warn him very seriously that if he perseveres in disregarding the injunction, the warning, and the advice I have given him, I shall be obliged to resort to powers which are vested in the Chair in case of disobedience to the Chair.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I was not aware it was out of Order that we should have our own opinion on a particular matter. I have heard it stated many times in this House—and surely, Mr. Courtney, a remark of that kind has never been deemed to be out of Order—I have always held, and I have heard it stated in this House, that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is in receipt of a salary. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman says he is not——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! Of course, the phrase "we have our own opinion" is not in itself out of Order; but it is capable of a thousand applications. When a direct statement is made as to fact, and upon that it is observed that "we have our own opinion upon that statement," there is only one interpretation that can be put upon it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I wish to withdraw the expression, and to accept the statement of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that he is not in receipt of a salary. I, however, object, and shall object, to the retention in Office of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman under the circumstances of the present situation in Ireland. He is in the position of an Irish landlord; he is in the position of a gentleman whose rents have been reduced time after time by the action of a legal Commission. He will, during the next few months, have a certain influence in regard to the appointment of a number of Sub-Commissioners, and in the appointment of the Head-Commissioners for their offices under the Land Act; and in addition to that he will have great weight with the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland upon all matters relating to Irish Government. Under all the circumstances of the case I think it would be right that I should move a reduction of this Vote to mark my appreciation of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's appointment. Unless it is intended to carry on a discussion upon the general question, I will move to reduce the Vote by the sum of £2,000, which would be about equivalent to the salary the right hon. and gallant Gentleman would receive if the Bill now before the House became law. I only trust that by the time that Bill is ripe for discussion in the House we shall have to deal with a Government which will have some greater regard for the feelings of the Irish people than to appoint a Gentleman with a career like that of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the present Parliamentary Under Secretary.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £23,967, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; Committee counted, and 40 Members being found present,

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.) said: My hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) has moved the reduction of this Vote, in order to get an explanation of the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) to his present position, and to mark our sense of the way in which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has discharged his duties. I may be permitted to observe that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was somewhat unfair in attributing to my hon. and learned Friend an intention to make any remarks about him in his absence which he would not have made in his presence. It was not my hon. and learned Friend's fault that he spoke for a few minutes in his absence. My hon. and learned Friend was most anxious that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman should be present to hear what he had to say both in reference to his present appointment and to his conduct in fulfilling the duties of his position. My hon. and learned Friend is the last man in this House to say, in the absence of any Member of the House, anything that he would not say in his presence; but, further than that, my hon. and learned Friend reiterated what he had said during the absence of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. We complain of this appointment, in the first place, as has been pointed out, because it is entirely without precedent. Previous Chief Secretaries for Ireland have occupied their responsible and onerous positions in troublesome times, and when the work of the Office was no light task—in times when there were many important Questions on the Notice Paper of the House day after day, and when the state of public affairs as regards Ireland required close and constant attention; but it has remained for the right hon. Gentleman the present occupant of the Office of Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) to establish a precedent of his own, and in connection with some of the most important Irish Business he is represented here by his deputy the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the present Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman). We have to complain of this for several reasons. We have to complain of the selection of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman himself; we have to complain on account of his antecedents and connection with the social and political movements in Ireland; and we have to complain of his appointment on the ground of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's conduct while he has filled his position. Now, in the first place, it is a matter of serious concern to us that, knowing as we do that some of the most important questions connected with Irish Administration can only be raised at Question time, these Questions cannot be addressed to a responsible Minister. There is no week of the year, or day of the week, in which there are not serious abuses of administration, in which there are not complaints with regard to the Constabulary authorities and various grievances to bring forward, and we claim it as a right that the responsible Minister of the Crown should be here to give that satisfaction to Irish Members which they are entitled to, and which he is appointed to supply. With regard to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet, it has been matter for frequent observation in this House that he has thought it consistent with his sense of public duty, and with the gravity of the present condition of affairs in Ireland, to treat Members on these Benches in a manner which is certainly not consistent with Parliamentary tradition, and is certainly repugnant to Parliamentary usage. I speak from experience, and although I do not put many Questions on the Notice Paper, I have yet been answered in such a manner as to make it extremely difficult for me to tolerate the answers received; but, not only that, there was about the air and tone of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that which I will not say was offensive, but certainly not dignified or fair to the Members of this House, who were doing their duty to their constituents, as we who represent Irish constituencies honestly endeavour to do. But there is more than that in the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. There is another fact to be considered by the Committee. The Land Question of Ireland, it will be admitted, is one of great, grave, and pressing importance; it is one which has taken up a large share of time in this House for several years, and which, from the present aspect of affairs in Ireland, will continue to occupy a large share of the attention of this House. It seems to me a most unfortunate selection on the part of the Government that they should have appointed to the position of Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland—a position of great responsibility in the Irish Administration—a Gentleman who is notoriously on the worst possible terms with his own tenantry; who, according to the evidence furnished by the Irish Land Commissioners, has been guilty of rack-renting to an enormous degree. It cannot be said that we are in any way drawing on our imagination for this statement. We refer to the Report of the Commissioners to show that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has rack-rented his tenants to the extent of 25, 40, and 50 per cent, and upon that ground alone I do think the selection of the Government has been most unfortunate. How can it be expected that the people of Ireland will look for fair and impartial treatment, and the holding of an impartial balance between the interests of the tenants and the landlords, when we see that this right hon. and gallant Gentleman with such antecedents and with such a character as a landlord has been appointed to this post? It has been made the subject of complaint that Englishmen and Scotchmen, who know nothing of Ireland, and whose only knowledge of the country has been obtained by a flying visit or two, have been appointed to the Office of Chief Secretary; no matter how limited their acquaintance may be with Irish political and social questions, notwithstanding their own immediate interest and sympathy with some exorbitant claims on the part of landlords, they may, at least, be considered in some sense as impartial. Can any such defence be urged on behalf of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman? Will anyone contend that he will bring a fair and unbiassed mind to the consideration of the many questions which may possibly arise in the six months which will elapse before Parliament re-assembles? It cannot be so contended. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland did not deem this a question of sufficient importance to retain him in his place in order to hear what my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford had to say on that most important point. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman cannot deny that the Land Commissioners have convicted him of exacting most exorbitant rents from his tenantry. But there is another point in connection with the Land Question in Ireland which I must refer to. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) knows very well that the question of turbary is one which gives rise to constant litigation between the landlords and tenants in Ireland. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford instanced a case that occurred not long ago in which the agent of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman obtained the conviction of a man for illegal turbary, and which conviction on appeal was quashed. How can the tenants of Ireland expect fair and impartial treatment at the hands of a right hon. and gallant Gentleman who holds such peculiar views with regard to the landlord's right of exclusive turbary and all the other rights claimed by Irish landlords in the past? But we have a more serious indictment against the Government in respect of the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, and that is his connection with the Orange Society. He has not denied connection with it in his speech to-night. Knowing the history of that society, knowing what a large element it has been for causing disturbance in Ireland during the past three-quarters of a century, is it not a most unhappy circumstance that a right hon. and gallant Gentleman connected with a bloodstained society—[An hon. MEMBER: No, no!] An hon. Member says "No!" but I refer to the Report of the Commission in Lord Palmerston's time, and the recommendation of that Commission not to appoint any Orangeman to official positions in Ireland. Our objection to this selection is not because the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is a Protestant, because sectarianism does not enter into this question at all. It is the political aspect of the question; and I ask if it is not most unfortunate that in the present condition of things the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, who is an Orangeman and a member of the Orange Society, should have been appointed to this responsible position? But, Sir, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman seems to glory in his declaration, made a couple of years ago at Dungannon, that he would do all that lay in his power—that he would lead a body of armed rowdies to interfere with the right of free speech and public meeting of certain Nationalists in the North of Ireland. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) has exposed this in two letters—he has convicted the right hon. and gallant Gentleman of a deliberate attempt to suppress free speech and the right of public meeting even at the risk of bloodshed in the North of Ireland. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman admits the entire case. He says—"Yes, at the head of loyal men." We know what that means; it means men loyal to rack-renting and Orange ascendancy, and everything that is bad in Irish history. The right hon. Baronet was then Chief Secretary for Ireland; and surely at that time there were men carrying on the Government of Ireland with a sufficiently strong hand. But the right hon. and gallant Gentleman said—"A fig for your legality; we will sweep these vermin the Nationalists off Ulster!" Will the English people expect, or will the Irish people expect, that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, who was prepared to sacrifice blood on the fields of Dungannon, and was ready to lead armed rowdies to put down public meetings, that he will act impartially as a Member of the present Administration? There can be but one reply to this question. These are matters of public notoriety; they are matters known to every man, woman, and child in Ulster. I say that the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is a scandal and a shame, and that in addition the fact of his being an Orangeman is a further shame on the appointment. But we have not done altogether with his claims to be recognized as a firm upholder of the law and a man qualified to occupy this responsible position in connection with Ireland, because he justifies the language which he used three or four years ago. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman might have claimed perhaps that he had said all this three years ago in the heat of the moment, and that he had not then the soberizing sense of the responsibility which attaches to him as a Member of her Majesty's Government. But, having that responsibility upon him, from his seat on the Treasury Bench he seems to glory in the declaration he made, that he meant to drown in blood the people of Ireland. I think by this appointment the Government cannot have much desire to preserve an even balance between Englishmen and Irishmen. At the time I refer to we associated under great difficulties, but always without the risk of disturbing the public peace. We protested at the time against giving the Government these dictatorial powers, and interfering with the Constitutional right of a free people to hold public meetings and proclaiming their views upon the questions of the day. We know that Lord Spencer was a man of acknowledged firmness, and that the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow was a man who seconded him in every way in his power; but it is certain that there would have been most lamentable results if there had been attacks of Orangemen on those meetings, because, naturally enough, you would have had retaliation on the part of such Nationalists who were armed. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman was guilty of the public conduct which I have described, as is well known to the Government of the day and admitted by them, but nevertheless he has been appointed to this Dictatorial and responsible position. Will anyone wonder if the question of the right of public meeting becomes one of great difficulty in Ireland? We shall assert that right of public meeting at all hazards, where it can be proved that there does not exist danger of the disturbance of the public order. Can we expect, or shall we expect, fair treatment from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman? It is impossible to say that we can, after his declaration and conduct in the past and his reiteration, here tonight, of those pernicious and terrible doctrines. They are doctrines which preached or practised would lead to bloodshed in many parts of the country; they are doctrines repugnant to the sense of Constitutional liberty even of the most darkened Tories. I believe even the most backward Tories on the opposite Benches have at least some desire that the right of public meeting should be respected; and yet we shall probably be exposed during the next six months to a large share of the control and influence of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. I repeat that this is a most unhappy selection, and one which it is impossible for the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to justify with his powers of assertion, which are undoubtedly large. I have referred to the fact that we have had occasion to find fault with the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's way of answering Questions in the House. In my opinion, the duty never should have devolved upon him to answer those Questions; but, owing to the present arrangement, I have had to complain of his tone and of the snappish manner in which he has answered me in reply to the most innocent Questions. To Questions which have contained no element of heat whatever, he has replied in a manner in which no Minister of the Crown should reply to any hon. Member in this House. This may appear a comparatively trivial matter to hon. Gentlemen opposite. They may probably say that the manner of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is due to firmness and bluntness of character; but it is nothing of the kind. It is the result of his ignorance of the responsibilities of the position which he fills, and which responsibilties lie heavily upon each and every Member of the Irish Administration at the present time. This most unhappy selection of the Government has added discredit to an already discredited Ministry, and it has placed them in this position, that we shall be able to say that they cannot ask for the confidence of the Irish people in the laws which they have passed. It is on these grounds that we ask the Committee to mark its sense of this right hon. and gallant Gentleman's appointment by supporting the Motion for the reduction of the Vote. I trust that when we have passed through the coming six months, and when Parliament has reassembled, the country will not have received many convincing proofs of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's incapacity to deal with questions of policy and questions affecting Ireland generally; although I cannot but believe that the country by that time will have received many proofs that the selection of the Government has been unfortunate, dangerous, and hostile to the best interests of the country.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory): I hope it will not be supposed that my opposition to this Vote will be founded on any narrow issue. On the contrary, it is founded on broad, general grounds, which I hope will satisfy the Committee and the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is absolutely ignorant of Ireland; and I contend that if there were no other objection to this Vote than this fact it would be amply sufficient to justify our opposing it. What is the virtual position of this matter? We have here in this House hon. Members from Scotland objecting very gravely to the Secretary for Scotland; but suppose that, in addition to his other disqualifications and disadvantages, it might be alleged, with truth, that he was utterly ignorant of Scotland and of Scotch affairs, what sort of an effect would that not be be likely to produce in this House and in Scotland? Does not everybody see that the effect would be to rouse such a storm in Scotland, and such indignation amongst Scotch Members, that the Government would be compelled to change their position? Well, but that is precisely the position you adopt in regard to Ireland. You treat Ireland on an absolutely different principle to that on which you treat Scotland. And what are you virtually saying? You declare that the Irish problem is the most difficult one you have to deal with, that, in fact, it has baffled statesmen for generations; and yet you appoint, as Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, practically as the ruler of Ireland, a man who confessedly knows nothing of the country. Now, not only do you do that, but you appoint a man who, as far as I can judge, does not try to know anything about Ireland. Since the right hon. Gentleman has been appointed, so far as I am aware, he has only visited Ireland twice; first, on the occasion when he——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not aware, probably, that an Amendment has been moved with regard to the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman) as Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant. The discussion must be confined to that point.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD: Of course, I submit to your ruling at once, Sir; but I was under the impression that as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet receives no salary, the question of his appointment could not be brought under any specific head, and that I might as well discuss the general question as that particular point. If you think, however, Sir, that it is more in accordance with the Rules of the House that I should defer my remarks until after this subject is disposed of I will do so.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I wish, Sir, to join my hon. Colleague in objecting to the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet. I do not think the appointment is a very extraordinary one, when you come to reflect upon it, and to consider the position of the Chief Secretary. I can well understand that a

Gentleman who is, by common repute, an oppressive Scotch landlord, should appoint as his deputy a Gentleman who is well known as an oppressive Irish landlord. By common repute the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is one of those Gentlemen who, in Scotland, confiscate a good deal of the tenants' improvements; and the right hon. and gallant Gentlemen the Member for the Isle of Thanet is apparently after the Chief Secretary's own heart, for he confiscates in Ireland the improvements of his tenants, and their labour, wherever he can. In my own opinion, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary took a very consistent course when he appointed the right hon. and gallant Gentleman as his subordinate. I agree with my hon. Colleagues in objecting to that appointment; but I cannot say that it is inconsistent. On the contrary, I think it is altogether consistent with the proceedings of the right hon. Gentleman. Apparently, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary is working without wages; but, if he is doing so in reality, he is the first Irish landlord to follow that course. I never knew an Irish landlord who did not manage to get paid, in some way or other, for everything he did. They always have a *quid pro quo* for whatever they do. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman belongs to the Orange Organization—an organization which we know, by the records of this House, endeavoured to set aside the Sovereign and place the Duke of Cumberland on the Throne. These are the men who prate and preach about their loyalty, and these are the men who point the finger of scorn at us, and say that we are not sufficiently loyal. But we can reply to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman and his Friends that, so far as we are concerned—we and our Predecessors who took up a position in this House similar to that which we now occupy—that we were always more loyal to the Crown than these Gentlemen who parade and make so much of their so-called loyalty. We are told by history that 7,000 families were turned out of the County of Armagh by this organization of which the Under Secretary is a professed member—this deputy who has no salary. He is not averse to the proceedings described by Plowden, because, a short time ago, he endeavoured to put down the right of public meeting in the counties of Armagh and Tyrone, and other counties in Ulster. He has the appointment of Orangemen as magistrates, and one appointment in the County of Armagh, which was made by the Chief Secretary—I do not know whether by the present Chief Secretary, but I think it was confirmed by him recently—was that of a gentleman named Hamilton. This gentleman is a member of the Orange organization, and this gentleman it was who stood opposite my house, and although he had the 42nd Regiment and other men under his command, he refused to budge an inch while the place was being demolished. When I put a Question in this House on the subject, what was the answer I received? Why, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary thought it was all a mistake. He said that a few panes of glass were broken, and that no further damage was done, and that my statement was an exaggeration. Well, Sir, I not only put a Question in this House on the subject, but I myself was a witness of the atrocity. It was after 9 o'clock at night when the depredation was done, and I could have fired from my house after that hour if I had chosen, as it was a burglarious attack. But what did the Orange magistrate do? Why, he drew up the police in front of my house, lest I should fire, so that he might be able to arrest me instantly. He did not arrest the men who fired into the house; and those who attacked it not only threw stones, but actually fired into the house. There was not a solitary word in the Report rendered by the Resident Magistrate with reference to the firing that went on on that occasion. He made no reference to it whatever; and one of the reasons why I so strongly object to this Orange Under Secretary to the Chief Secretary is that the statements which are being made day after day at that Table are not true. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Order!"] Well, Sir, when the Chief Secretary rises up in his place, I do not say that he makes statements which, to his own knowledge, are untrue. Every man who occupies the position of Chief Secretary must depend upon second-hand information; but we, the Irish Members, know that day after day he rises at that Table, and makes statements completely at variance with the facts. I say that that is a most humiliating position for a Chief Secretary for Ireland to occupy, or for his Deputy to occupy. From the antecedents of the Chief Secretary, it would seem likely that the position does not annoy him very much; but I assume that even an oppressive Scotch landlord has some idea of what is due to this House, and therefore it is that I think the right hon. Gentleman should answer Questions himself, and that he should do without a Deputy as far as possible. The information that is received is from the different officials in Ireland who are always controlled by the Orange Society. Sir William Kaye, the Assistant Under Secretary at the Castle, whose duty it is to swear in Privy Councillors, is an Orangeman too. He belongs to my county and my constituency. As to Mr. Hamilton, I know his antecedents, and I know the antecedents of those gentlemen with whom the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is associated; and I say it is a monstrous thing that hon. Gentlemen in this House representing Irish constituencies—including myself and others who represent Ulster constituencies—should have to rise in our places and put Questions to the Chief Secretary, knowing perfectly well, before they answer these Questions, the description of replies which we shall receive. We can well anticipate the answers which will be given by these men. I join my hon. Colleagues in objecting to this appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): The matter—the physical matter—is great indeed, but the mental capabilities are small of the subject under dispute. I had the pleasure of being acquainted with the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet many many years ago. At that time he was called "The King." Goodness knows why he was called "The King," except that it formed portion of his name; but, at any rate, he was considered to be the king of a certain section of the population who had great influence, as part of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's career shows, at Cremorne and such places; but, Sir, why was the right hon. and gallant Gentleman chosen Under Secretary? Why was he chosen by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland as his buffer? It was as I have said, Sir, because the physical matter was thick; because the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is dense; because he is pachydermatous, being of a rhinoceros-like sort of nature——

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Member to approach the consideration of the Business in a little more serious tone, and to use language a little more becoming to the House of Commons.

Several hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Dr. TANNER: I presume, Sir, I am not out of Order in saying that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is pachydermatous, because that only means thick-skinned; and I intended to say that, accordingly, the shafts of ridicule which might wound a tender and sensitive being like the Chief Secretary drop off harmless from the scales which clothe the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman clearly was appointed for the sake of protecting the Chief Secretary from the Questions which, in the interests of our constituents, we are obliged to address to him from time to time. Well, Sir, it is the old, old story. In the words of the comic opera, it is—

"The pretty little flower and old oak tree."

The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary required some assistance, and he has got it in the shape, the material shape, of the Parliamentary Under Secretary. Well, now we have to complain, as has already been stated, of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's manner in answering Questions. His manner in answering Questions ought to be plainly perceived and understood by every Member of the House. ["Hear, hear!"] "Hear, hear!" says a Gentleman who is certainly one of the most thoroughly free from bias sitting upon the other side of the House. Well, when the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant comes to the Table, his manner in itself is immense, at any rate, to the person who puts the Question. He comes up—and does he ever attempt to answer any Question without reading it? No, Sir; he comes up, and he reads out the answer, which, I presume, is supplied to him. It is merely a mechanical action —"Pull the string, and the figure will work." The right hon. and gallant Gentleman comes up and reads out his answer, and if you ask him anything supplementary, he says to you—"Put the Question down on the Paper," or, "I shall be most happy to answer this on a future occasion." Why, Sir, I imagine that in a House like this, which is for the management of Public Business, Members ought to be approached in a very different manner, and in a very different method to that. ["Hear, hear!"] "Hear, hear!" says an hon. Gentleman opposite. Well, Sir, it is ludicrous—it really is a ludicrous state of affairs—[*Ministerial cheers*]——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

DR. TANNER: It would be ludicrous in itself were it not for the reverse side of the picture. It is ludicrous in this House; but it is intended as an insult to the people of Ireland. A Gentleman who has always declared himself to be an enemy of the mass of the people of Ireland is selected as Under Secretary for the reason that he belongs to the classes. "The classes against the masses" has always been the doctrine of a Tory Administration, and, forsooth, when they come to deal with Ireland, they put it in a practicable way by adopting as Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland merely a figure-head, a representative of the classes, and they do it merely as an insult to the people of Ireland. I sincerely trust that that insult will not bear bad fruit. For my own part, I know that putting Questions to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman day after day is very tiring, because when you had the pleasure of knowing the right hon. and gallant Gentleman once, under different circumstances, when he comes up and answers Questions in his particularly and peculiarly offensive way, one almost loses patience and gets tired of the thing. Everybody sitting on this side below the Gangway will bear me out that the manner of the Under Secretary is particularly and peculiarly offensive, and I maintain that in itself is capable of creating an increased estrangement between law and order and the people of Ireland—the law and order of which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is now supposed to be the responsible upholder. Now, if business is going to be carried on, and carried on in a spirit of respect for law and order, I really think the Government have gone the very worst possible way to work to secure it, and, accordingly, I sincerely hope that the Government will seriously weigh the observations which have been addressed to them in the course of this debate. This question will crop up again at some future time, because the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is not always to do his work for nothing. He will have to be paid sooner or later. I did not rise, Sir, for the purpose of inflicting a long speech upon the Committee in connection with this matter—a matter which appears to me a most lamentable, and, I might almost say a most degraded one—but I rise to express a sincere hope that the Goveanment will, at any rate before the affair goes too far—before the winter comes in and the dark nights come on—they will, at any rate, adopt some safeguard, some muzzle, in order to prevent the right hon. and gallant Gentleman giving effect to those bloodthirsty views which are characteristic of the Orange Society. ["Order, order!"] The noble Marquess says "Order, order;" but does he know anything about the Orange Society? They once tried to swear me in, and I can tell this Committee what my experience was. I was told then and there that the object of the Orange Society was to drive Catholics out of Ireland; and because I said to the man who swore me in as an Orangeman that Catholics had as good a right to live as Protestants, he refused to have me as an Orangeman. I was only a boy of 15 years of age at that time. That, however, is the organization to which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman belongs, and that is the organization to my criticism of which the noble Marquess opposite says, "Order, order!" Let the noble Marquess learn something about it. That is the organization of which, as I say, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is the frontispiece. If this sort of figure head be adopted to grace Her Majesty's Government, all I can say is, that I congratulate them upon it, because he will be a figure head which will lead them to digrace—which will lead them to that digrace and retirement which I sincerely hope to see them find a *refugium peccatorium* at no distant date.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I do not rise to utter a single word of reply to the exceedingly personal attack which the hon. Member who has just sat down has made upon my right hon. and gallant Friend. What he has uttered I imagine is quite within the strict limits of debate, yet I think everyone who heard him will admit that that speech was a species of personal attack which does little credit to, and which, if it becomes permanent in this House, will entirely destroy what remains of the dignity of the Parliament of this country. The appointment of my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member of the Isle of Thanet, as Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, has been described by other hon. Members below the Gangway opposite in speeches, the general tone of which I might complain, though the speeches they have delivered at all events, as contrasted with that of the hon. Member who has just sat down, may be deemed both dignified and moderate. Now, I am glad to have this opportunity of bearing my testimony as the person best qualified to judge, to the ability and effect with which my right hon. and gallant Friend has performed the duties which have been devolved upon him, and I would especially call the attention of the Committee to the kind of criticism which has been made upon my right hon. and gallant Friend, as compared and contrasted with the kind of criticism which has been passed upon myself. The accusation of hon. Gentlemen when dealing with the humble individual who now addresses the Committee is, that I am entirely ignorant of Irish affairs. They say that, being a Scotchman, and not having resided for any great length of time in Ireland, it is impossible for me to have that intimate knowledge of the affairs of Ireland to qualify me for the administration of the business of that country. Very well, Sir, that accusation is one which I conceive might have been levelled, and was no doubt levelled with equal force against everyone of my predecessors. So far as I am aware, since the time of the late Lord Mayo, there has not been a single Irishman appointed to this Office. Well, I have heard a statement by Gentlemen, not Irish Members but Radical Members, to the effect that the appointments of Englishmen or Scotchmen to the post of Chief Secretary, shows a want of sympathy with Irish requirements. There may be some faint justification for that idea; but, at all events, the Government were of opinion that if an Under Secretary were appointed, an Irishman should be chosen, and observe what the result of the appointment of an Irishman has been. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have occupied their time ever since my right hon. and gallant Friend was appointed, in raking up every incident, or every imagined incident, in his past life which they thought could be used against him. Where history failed they have fallen back on invention. They have coloured and exaggerated every incident when there was any foundation whatever for it, and where they failed to find a slight foundation of fact for an incident, they have done without it and have invented the whole thing. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the right hon. Gentleman that he is exceeding the limit of Parliamentary debate when he attributes to hon. Members the invention of charges against the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I admit that the expression was highly un-Parliamentary, and I apologize for having used it. I will say that hon. Members have been carried away by the force and fervour of their imaginations in dealing with this subject. It will be observed that every Irishman, or, at all events, every Irishman that I have ever seen or heard of, whose life has been passed in Ireland, and who. therefore, is acquainted from personal experience with Irish affairs, is, owing to the very fact that he is so mixed up with Irish affairs, connected, or supposed to be connected, with one of the Parties into which that country is divided. It is, therefore, impossible that any Irishman could be appointed of whom it would not be open to hon. Gentlemen opposite to say that he belonged to this or that organization of which they disapprove, and that he is, therefore, wholly incapable of managing Irish affairs. We are, therefore, in this dilemma—if we appoint a man who is not an Irishman, he knows nothing of Irish affairs, and should not be entrusted with their administration, and if we appoint an Irishman, he is a member of some organization and therefore cannot be trusted in the Executive. [An hon. MEMBER: He is an Orangeman.] The hon. Member will kindly allow me to go on with my speech. If the Chief Secretary is not an Irishman, hon. Members say he is totally ignorant of Irish affairs and has no proper qualification for their administration; and if he is an Irishman they say he is connected with some Party which makes him practically incapable of holding an equal balance between the two Parties. Now, if the canons laid down by hon. Gentlemen for the appointment of Irish Secretaries were adhered to, you would never have an Irish Secretary at all. I will not endeavour to deal with the personal accusations which have been brought against my right hon. and gallant Friend. My right hon. and gallant Friend has himself dealt with them in the speech he has delivered, and has blown them into ten thousand fragments. It would be as unbecoming, as it would be unnecessary for me to again go over the ground which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman has so well traversed, and I only rose, therefore, briefly to expose the contradictions and fallacies which underlie the speeches which have been delivered, and briefly to take this opportunity of bearing publicly my testimony to the ability and industry and efficiency which my right hon. and gallant Friend has displayed in the discharge of the duties of his Office.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I do not intend or desire to prolong this discussion to any considerable extent, as I think we have now reached a period at which it might be fairly concluded; but I do think that before we leave this branch of the question, we are entitled to complain of the conduct of the Government in this respect, because what have the Government done? Why have they made an appointment which, so far as I can understand it, is entirely without precedent? There has been a difference of opinion between the two Front Benches on that point, and the Government have given a distinct pledge on more than one occasion in my own hearing, that in this Session a Bill should be introduced for the purpose of confirming the appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. From that pledge they have now withdrawn. I consider that the Irish Representatives have serious grounds of grievance for the Government withdrawing from that pledge which they distinctly have done. That in itself is a sufficient ground and justification for the debate which has now arisen in, I think, a very inadequate and inconvenient way. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary bears his testimony to the efficiency of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland. Well, in the first place, I must say that I do not believe there is a man in the House more unqualified to give testimony to the efficiency of anybody than the right hon. Gentleman. I would allude to two points mentioned in his speech. He founded an elaborate argument, which seemed to be perfectly satisfactory to his own mind—for he treated it as an argument which he himself believed—that no Irishman could be appointed to the Irish Secretaryship without being open to the charge of his being a Party man. He condemned the appointment of Irishmen to this Office as inconvenient, because of the peculiar position of the Irish Government; but what are the facts concerning the Irish Government? Men are appointed to the Irish Secretaryship altogether independently and apart from any control by the Irish people. You require, therefore, on the part of a man so appointed, qualifications which you would not ordinarily require in appointments as between the two Front Benches. We have no Parliamentary control over those officials—we cannot influence their action. We go on talking here, but all to no purpose. It may give some satisfaction to our constituents that we should go on criticizing in this way, talking by the hour; but we know that it is all to no purpose. It is followed by no results, and all our words fall on the Chief Secretary like water on a duck's back. He is not affected by what we say, and he is therefore placed absolutely beyond all effective criticism on the part of the Representatives of the Irish people. Therefore you are bound to look for, in a man responsible for the administration of the law in Ireland, very different qualifications from those you would expect in an Englishman, who is appointed and controlled by the Representatives of the majority of his countrymen in this House. We find, when we come to examine the arguments of the right hon.

Gentleman the Chief Secretary more closely, that they will not bear scrutiny. He says that the condition of things is such that it would be impossible to find any Irishman who was not subject to this criticism. Well, I admit that in the present position of the Government, so long as you maintain it, it is almost beyond the wit of man to find an Irish Member who would hold the balance evenly between all Parties. That is one of the ineradicable evils of the system of Government in Ireland. Does it not condemn your system of government in that country when you are obliged to stand up and admit that you cannot find, to administer the Government of the country, a man who really understands the affairs of that country? But the Government, by the appointment of an Irishman which they have now the effrontery to boast of as a step in the right direction, have shown that they have no desire to seek out a man who could by any possibility be considered an impartial man. Why, Sir, there are hundreds of men in Ireland, intelligent business men, who have not taken any active part in politics on one side or the other who might have been placed in the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's position, who would not have conducted themselves so objectionably and with such animosity to a Party in the House as that right hon. and gallant Gentleman has done. Did the Government seek for a man who would act impartially between the contending factions in Ireland? Clearly they did not. Who did they pitch upon? In criticizing the right hon. and gallant Gentleman I am not going to do it as a personal matter, but I am going to treat him as a public man in Ireland. They pitched upon the Member for the Isle of Thanet. Sir, they might just as well have taken myself as Under Secretary, and I fully admit that, from their point of view, to appoint me or any hon. Member who is prominent on these Benches as Chief Secretary or Under Secretary would have caused the raising of an uproar by the Landlord Party. But have we not a right to complain as well as the Irish landlords? I challenge hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to say in what respect is it less unjust to the people of Ireland for the landlords to appoint one of their fuglemen and champions in Ireland to have unrestrained power over them than it would have been if the Government had appointed myself or the hon. Member for the City of Cork. If my hon. Friend or myself were appointed to positions in the Government of Ireland, the landlords would have had just cause to complain. Supposing the Unionist Government comes into power, and supposing that in order to show their impartiality they signalized their advent to power by the appointment of the hon. Member for Cork, or myself, or any hon. Member on these Benches Chief Secretary for Ireland, I should like to hear the uproar which would arise throughout the country. But that is precisely similar to what you have done. For the Office of Chief Secretary you have not shown the slightest desire or made the least attempt to select an Irishman; but when you have made up your minds to associate with the Chief Secretary an Irishman, it would only have been reasonable to expect that whilst selecting someone who knew something of Irish politics, you would have chosen a man who would have been in some way acceptable to the Irish people. But that you did not do—you cast your eyes round and selected a man whose sole recommendation is that he is the bitterest partizan. He is a strong supporter of this Conservative Government — an Orange Leader, and who is attended by every circumstance which can render him unacceptable by the Irish people. I should think that with, perhaps, the exception of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson)—and those two men may be said to run neck and neck together—you could not have selected from the whole of Ireland a man who would have been more objectionable to the people of that country in the position in which you have placed the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet. I have classed the right hon. and gallant Gentleman and the hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh together; but there is this difference between them—that in the case of the latter Gentleman there has been less dispute with his tenantry than there has been in the case of the Under Secretary. Practically, however, those Gentlemen stand upon the same platform—they are both bitter partizans, both Orangemen, and both champions of evictions. It is obvious that the Government has selected the present Under Secretary for the simple reason that he is a bitter partizan. And in the course you have taken I venture to say that even the Tory Party sitting opposite do not approve of it. Men who belong to your own Party have come to me and have said that this appointment on your part is a most extraordinary proceeding. The only means the Irish Members have, as Representatives of the Irish people, of bringing influence to bear on the Government for the remedy of grievances is by a system of Questions; well, but the Chief Secretary has appointed this bitter Orange partizan to fulfil this task. The right hon. Gentleman, himself responsible for the Government of Ireland, sneaks behind the Speaker's Chair, and refuses to answer our Questions, leaving this partizan Under Secretary to discharge his duty. We know perfectly well, from the experience of other Irish Secretaries—we know from the statement of Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, one Chief Secretary—that the putting of Questions to him in this House was a valuable assistance to him, enabling him to discharge his duties satisfactorily. Mr. Campbell-Bannerman stated in this House that the putting of Questions sometimes enabled him to obtain correct information upon matters with regard to which he had been imperfectly informed. They were the means of guiding him in making a thorough investigation into certain matters, and enabling him ultimately to arrive at the truth, and of course, in that way, to carry on a more efficient administration. This system of putting Questions is one of the greatest means—in fact, the only means—we, as the Representatives of the people of Ireland, have of bringing any influence to bear upon the Administration of that country—the only means, I say, is putting Questions, and insisting upon answers being given. And what does the Irish Chief Secretary do—who is the only responsible officer of the Administration of Ireland—under these circumstances? He puts up this right hon. and gallant Gentleman, this partizan leader, whilst he himself, as I again say, sneaks behind the Speaker's Chair. I say the Chief Secretary is the only official we have to look to. In England you have many officials, but we Irish Representatives have only the Chief Secretary, for the Irish Attorney General cannot speak with authority upon matters of general administration, and if he could he is only a subordinate. It is only very occasionally that the Chief Secretary comes from his hiding place, and deigns to answer a Question. I have seen him frequently in the corner there, sometimes this side of the door, sometimes the other side, waiting for the moment the last Question is put, with the deliberate intention of evading the duty of replying to our queries. I want to know what the right hon. Gentleman the Irish Chief Secretary is here for? The business of answering Irish Questions is his chief duty, the government of Ireland being managed by Sir Redvers Buller, and by far the most important part of the right hon. Gentleman's function is, or ought to be, attending here at Question time, in order to answer hon. Members who represent Ireland; but instead of taking a proper view of his duties, he puts up, as I say, a partizan who hates all of us, and all our convictions. Being an Irishman, he, of course, takes a peculiarly envenomed view of those Irish questions which an Englishman would not take. His manner was particularly offensive when he first commenced the duty which the Chief Secretary transferred to him. No doubt, his experience after the first two or three weeks and I suppose the many friendly admonitions he has received have produced an effect upon him, and have toned him down very considerably; but still, although his manner has improved, he is just as unsatisfactory in answering Questions as he was at first. His answers are of a wooden description. He merely reads out statements which have been supplied to him from Dublin Castle, and we can get no satisfaction from him at all. We feel we are dealing with a hostile witness, with an enemy whose object is to mislead, who, as a matter of fact, represents the officials in Ireland acting as their partizan and not as an impartial Member of the Executive, whose duty it is to take an impartial and judicial position between the public and the officials. What we want, so long as the present abominable Government exists, is that we should have a man in the Irish Office, be he English, Irish, or Scotch—and I am not so very anxious that he should be an Irishman—who will endeavour to look into the working of the Irish Office, in a spirit of honesty, and will resolutely strive to arrive at the truth without allowing himself to be biassed in favour of the officials. There cannot be the slightest doubt, even from the point of view of a Unionist, that the great evil in Ireland is the existence of a bureaucratic system—this old crusted system, crusted with long impunity and irresponsibility and want of criticism in Dublin Castle. Even from the point of view of the Unionist, you should have in Ireland a Chief Secretary who will approach those matters with an open mind, and who will, if he finds that the officials are right, be prepared to defend them, but, if he finds that they are wrong, will be prepared to condemn them. But here we have a man who is a bitter partizan, who comes to this House, not as an impartial administrator, but as the champion of the Irish officials, as the enemy of the Irish people or their Representatives, and determined to meet all their questions by answers which shall be satisfactory to no one but himself and those he represents. We desire to criticize the conduct of those officials, and to have their actions judged impartially, and that is why we consider the appointment of the present Under Secretary for Ireland altogether indefensible. I am anxious to bring this discussion to a close, in order that we may proceed to consider the question of general administration under this Vote; but I warn the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that this question will be raised on a future occasion, when the Government bring forward their proposal for fixing the salary of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet (Colonel King-Harman), and when the question is again raised I shall be very much surprised if we do not get some support, even from hon. Members opposite.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I have listened very attentively to the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), and I must say I do not suppose he wishes to do an injustice to an opponent, even to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet. I have no doubt that he has uttered what he believes to be absolutely true, so far as his views are concerned; but I join issue, on behalf the Government, with the hon. Gentleman. The appointment of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was the appointment of the Government, and the acts of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman are the acts of the Government. We are responsible for them; we entirely accept that responsibility; and instead of believing, as the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo does, that my right hon. and gallant Friend the Under Secretary is influenced by partial motives, and is anxious to shield officials unjustly, we believe that he is absolutely impartial, and is incapable of any attempt unduly and impartially to protect those officers who have in any way failed to do their duty to any hon. Gentleman in this House, either on the opposite side or on this. I can understand the feeling which the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo and other hon. Gentlemen opposite have given expression to, and I deeply deplore it. I think it most unfortunate that hon. Gentlemen from Ireland are at present—I will not say they will always be so—but that they are at present incapable of doing complete justice to the qualities of those to whom they are politically opposed. I say it is a great misfortune, and I hope the time is coming when the capacity for doing absolute justice—for doing complete justice—to those from whom they differ, will come to hon. Members from Ireland, as I trust it will always exist in England.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): *Parnellism and Crime!*

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I have never been of opinion that interruptions are arguments. I am not in the habit of interrupting the hon. and learned Member for North Longford nor his Colleagues when they are attempting to place their views before the House. I will not prolong this discussion any further, except to say that we, the Government, accept, entirely and freely, complete responsibility for all the acts of my right hon. and gallant Friend; that it is at their instance that the course which has been adopted has been pursued; and that, in our judgment, my right hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Isle of Thanet has most conscientiously endeavoured to discharge his duty by the Government, and by the country to which he belongs.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): We have had a very edifying statement from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury; but I must just remark that, in my opinion, it comes with remarkably good grace from the vendor of *Parnellism and Crime.*

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 52; Noes 113: Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 438.) [10.45 p.m.]

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD: The arguments I was endeavouring to address to the Committee when I was interrupted I think were not appreciated by the Chief Secretary. I did not complain of him because he is not an Irishman; but what we do complain of is that he is a Scotchman wholly ignorant of Ireland. All Scotchmen and all Englishmen are not wholly ignorant of Ireland; and I am thankful to say that the number of those Scotchmen and Englishmen who were appointed to the Chief Secretaryship of Ireland without any knowledge of that country is, and has been, rapidly diminishing. I think that the least we can expect is that when the Government appoint a Chief Secretary who is not an Irishman, they should appoint someone whom they know has had some contact with the country, some personal experience of it, and entertains some sympathy with it. Now, I was saying that the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary not only knows nothing about Ireland, because, so far as I am aware, he has only made two visits to that country since his appointment—the first time when he took the Oath as Chief Secretary, and the second time when he went over to Ireland for the purpose of proclaiming the country. Now, our complaint is not merely that the right hon. Gentleman is ignorant of Ireland, and does not wish to know anything about it, but we complain also that he does not discharge his duties in this House. He is distinctly appointed to do certain work, and that work he throws over on to the shoulders of another. Now, I say, Sir, that even if that other were thoroughly as competent as we believe him to be incompetent, the right hon. Gentleman ought not to throw his work upon the shoulders of anybody. He ought to do his work himself. The right hon. Gentleman does not choose to do his own work, and I think it rather hard that he should get a man to do it, and give him no salary for his pains. I must say that if I had dirty work to do, and wanted it done by somebody else, I should take care that the person who did it should be paid for doing it. But the Government give the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet no salary. They have not attempted to introduce into this House a Bill for the purpose of giving him a salary, and I do think that that is rather hard upon the Parliamentary Under Secretary. Now, Sir, what is the position in which the Irish Members are placed in this House? We are compelled, by the Rules of the House, to address our Questions to the Head of the Department—we have been distinctly told that that is the course for us to pursue—and instead of acting as we do in other cases—that is to say, instead of putting down our Questions to the Ministers who will reply to them, we are compelled to go through the farce and the utter absurdity of saying—"I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland a Question," when we know perfectly well that the Question will not be answered by him, but by his subordinates. Now, I do not think that that is the way in which hon. Members ought to be treated in this House. And now I want, for two or three minutes, to institute a comparison between the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and others who have held a similar position in this House, and I do not think that that comparison will be particularly favourable to the present Chief Secretary. In 1874 the Conservative Government took Office, and they appointed as their Chief Secretary the right hon. Baronet the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach); that right hon. Gentleman made himself thoroughly acquainted with all the Departments of the Irish Administration. In his time there was passed probably one of the most useful measures which have ever been passed in Ireland—namely, the Intermediate Education Act; and, so far as it was possible for anyone of his politics to gain the respect and goodwill of the people of Ireland, they were gained by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol at that time. Then he was followed in the Office by Mr. James Lowther, of whom I will only say that if he could do nothing else, he could do one thing which the Irish people at that time appreciated—he could hunt. I wonder whether the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) can hunt. I imagine it would imply too much exertion on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. We have, however, heard something in the House of the right hon. Gentleman's talents and abilities in the way of boating. My experience is that the right hon. Gentleman can neither hunt nor punt. With the change in Government that followed, we had in Ireland the late Mr. W. E. Forster. I dare say the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) will say—"Well, at any rate, I am doing better than Mr. Forster;" but is the right hon. Gentleman quite sure that he is doing better, or is likely to do better, than Mr. Forster? Mr. Forster failed, because he put 1,000 Irishmen in prison and kept them there without trial, because in that he suspended the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland. We have been told, on high authority, that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has virtually suspended, although not in form, the Habeas Corpus Act in Ireland, because the trial to which my hon. Friends and myself may be subjected to by-and-bye, if we hold meetings of the proclaimed National League, will be a sham and a delusion; and, therefore, the failure which beset Mr. Forster is, I think, very likely indeed to beset the right hon. Gentleman. But, at any rate, whatever Mr. Forster's faults were, they were the faults of his head rather than of his heart. We all knew perfectly well that Mr. Forster sympathized with Ireland in the time of her greatest sorrow, and showed that sympathy by visiting the country and by personally administering to the wants of the dying people. When has the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary ever manifested anything at all approaching such sympathy for Ireland? Then after Mr. Forster we had the right hon. Gentleman the present Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan). Well, Sir, we think he has atoned for many faults in his administration by having seen the true remedy for Irish grievances, and by setting himself deliberately to secure that remedy. Then we had as Chief Secretary the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman), who also found salvation in Home Rule. Then there was a change of Government and you came into power once more, and you appointed as Chief Secretary the right hon. Gentleman the present Vice President of the Council (Sir William Hart Dyke), who, at any rate, did no harm if he did no particular good. Then we had after him the right hon. Gentleman who now leads the House (Mr. W. H. Smith). His tenure of Office was not particularly long; indeed, I believe it lasted only for 48 hours. But, when we consider the distinguished ability with which he conducts Business in this House, when we remember how versatile he is, how extraordinary his eloquence, and how wonderful his power of illustration is, and what a master he is of all the tricks and rules of debate, when we remember what an illustrious person in every respect he is, I am sure the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) will feel that, compared with him, he must hide his diminished head. Then we had, when the Government once more changed, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) who, by his participation in the great measure, did more for the pacification of Ireland than all your 87 Coercion Acts of the present century rolled into one have done. Now, all these various Chief Secretaries differed from one another in a great many points. They differed in temperament, in politics; but there was one point on which they all agreed—they did their own work. They stood firmly; they stood up against the attacks which were made upon them from these Benches; they stood them like men; they braved the storm. But what does the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) do? He does not brave the storm; the right hon. Gentleman hides himself from the shower of criticism which is continually falling from these Benches, owing to the superior knowledge we possess of the condition of our country. I can easily understand that Lord Salisbury may have been very anxious to find a place for the right hon. Gentleman. I can easily understand the motives which may have induced him to desire to shelter him from our criticism, and the exposure of his ignorance which would be sure to follow, if he answered our Questions for himself. But I do not think the House or the country will acquit the right hon. Gentleman of blame for not doing the work which he has been appointed and paid to perform. Then, Sir, there is another complaint which I make against the right hon. Gentleman. I had the honour of introducing to the Gallery of this House an Austrian lady, whose ability, I think, will not be denied by the right hon. Gentleman, when I say that she is an occasional contributor to *The Free Press* of Vienna and *The Pesther Lloyd.* She was very anxious to see our Parliamentary system at work, and she observed very carefully all she saw. I was very naturally much impressed by her criticisms, and what she said was that she had always supposed that English gentlemen were superior—[*Cries of* "Question!"]—you will see the Question in a moment—I am not running away from it—she said she always supposed that English gentlemen were superior to all others, but that her opinion on that subject was considerably modified when she observed the action of hon. Gentlemen opposite. She added that there was one man—and now hon. Gentlemen opposite will understand the point of my remarks—there was one man on the Front Government Bench who reclined or stretched himself out at full length when Irish Members were speaking, pretending to be asleep; but, she said, you could easily see that the right hon. Gentleman was not asleep, for every now and then he would laugh derisively. That was during the passage of the Crimes Bill through this House, and I, for one, had no great difficulty in identifying the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. I do think that in the somewhat delicate position which the right hon. Gentleman occupies we ought to receive courtesy at his hands—he ought to observe all the principles of courtesy which, of course, he so well understands. My friend has lived in Italy, in France, in Germany, in Scotland, and in Ireland; but very likely she was not very intimately acquainted with the manner of the English aristocracy, of which the right hon. Gentleman is so distinguished a scion. [*A laugh.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite may think courtesy a small matter, and discourtesy a small matter; they may think that courtesy is a thing which you may take off and put on at pleasure, just as a man takes off and puts on his clothes; but I hold that bad manners are bad models, and I say the right hon. Gentleman ought to learn this lesson and treat hon. Gentlemen of this House invariably with courtesy, and in a very different style to that in which he acted when the Crimes Bill was passing through the House. There is another charge still graver which I desire to bring against the right hon. Gentleman. I deliberately charge the right hon. Gentleman with breaking a pledge which he solemnly gave to this House. My hon. Friend the junior Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Maurice Healy) made this clear to the world, and it was commented upon in various newspapers, and even the most moderate newspapers gave a verdict against the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman distinctly promised, when the Crimes Bill was passing through Committee, that he would introduce a clause in it which would provide that anyone accused under the Act should have a right of appeal, no matter how short the term of his imprisonment might be. It was not convenient to the right hon. Gentleman to keep that pledge. *The Times* newspaper shrieked against it, and, of course, he immediately followed the doctrine taught him by *The Times*, and he backed out of the assurance, telling the House he had changed his mind. But the right hon. Gentleman is a student of ethics, and he knows perfectly well that there is the widest difference in the world between a broken promise and an altered intention. The right hon. Gentleman may alter his intention a thousand times a-day if he is only affected; but he has no right to break a pledge solemnly given to this House. This, Mr. Courtney, is the man to whose tender mercies we are to be subjected during the next winter. I do not care to attack subordinates, but to put the blame upon what I think are the right shoulders. What are the complaints I have to make against the right hon. Gentleman? I have to complain that he is ignorant of Ireland, and is resolved to remain ignorant; that he discharges some of the most delicate of his duties through an incompetent and blundering deputy; that he has not treated the Irish Representatives in this House with courtesy, but, on the contrary, with studied discourtesy; and that he has shamelessly broken a pledge solemnly given in this House. These are my charges. I think they are plain and patent to everyone. I think that the Members of this Committee ought closely to take them into their consideration, to weigh each one of them separately, and then, putting them all together, to estimate their cumulative force. If they do that, I am persuaded that they will arrive at the inevitable conclusion that the right hon. Gentleman who now occupies the position of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and who has the liberties of the people of Ireland, and of the Representatives of the people of Ireland, absolutely in his hands, has not earned, and is not likely to earn, and does not deserve the salary granted by the House of Commons to the Irish Chief Secretary for the discharge of definite and well-defined duties.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know that I should have thought it worth while to occupy the time of the Committee by replying to the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ossory Division of Queen's County (Mr. W. A. Macdonald) if I did not feel that the hon. Gentleman has done a little more than repeat, in his own language—language, I am bound to say, not at all more extraordinary and extravagant—accusations which have been made against me not only to-night, but on other occasions, by many hon. Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway opposite. The hon. Member has drawn comparisons between myself and my Predecessors in Office, certainly not at all to my advantage. But my recollection goes back, as that of the hon. Gentleman does not, to the period of Office of all the Chief Secretaries of whom he he has spoken, and I perfectly well remember that at the moment when each of these Gentlemen happened to be in Office he was the unfortunate recipient of abuse not less virulent than any which has been levelled against me to-night and on previous occasions. In fact, a not inconsiderable modicum of invective is as much an appanage of the Office I hold—and I am bound to say is paid in a much more liberal measure and not less punctually—as the legitimate and legal emoluments of that Office, and is paid regularly to every successive occupant of that Office. I admit there may be some change in the peculiar epithets employed—the abuse is transferred from one shoulder to another with just as much alteration as will make it fit the new occupant of the Office. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have always a large stock of epithets at their command, and they have simply given to their remarks a little local colouring to prevent them being a mere tame repetition of the invectives levelled against my Predecessors. I really am surprised at some of the comparisons the hon. Gentleman has drawn. He has compared me very unfavourably with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs (Mr. Campbell-Bannerman). Now, it is one of the chief accusations levelled against me, that I am not intimately acquainted with Irish affairs. That is exactly the accusation which was directed, certainly with no less force, against the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Stirling Burghs, and yet the right hon. Gentleman has been described to-night by the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) as, perhaps, the best Irish Secretary there has been. Then there is the right hon. Gentleman who is now the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan). The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Macdonald) has heaped eulogies on the head of that right hon. Gentleman. There is more joy amongst hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway over that right hon. Gentleman who has repented than there is over all the 232 just Gladstonians who need no repentance. But I perfectly well recollect the time when that right hon. Gentleman was the daily recipient of the assaults of hon. Gentlemen, when he visibly grew older and iller under the daily assaults made upon him; when there was no accusation too vile to be levelled against him; and when even what are regarded in the minds of hon. Gentlemen as the vices of Mr. Forster showed white against the dark background of the iniquities of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow. But what, after all, do these accusations amount to? That they are part of the business of hon. Gentlemen I quite admit. They would not be supposed to be doing their duty by their constituents unless they periodically came to this House and attacked the Chief Secretary for Ireland. They would be supposed to be becoming lax in the performance of their functions as members of the Nationalist Party if they did not make the Irish Executive, and especially the person who is responsible for the Irish Executive, the daily object of their animadversions. But when I come to an analysis of the particular accusations made against me I find they chiefly consist in this. Firstly, that I have not visited Ireland very frequently during the period I have been in Office; and, secondly, that I have during part of my tenure of Office requested my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel King-Harman) to deal with the Questions put down on the Paper at Question time. As to the first accusation—namely, that I have not visited Ireland very much—I submit to the House that since I have become Irish Secretary there has scarcely been a single night on which Irish Business has not been the chief Business of the night. Therefore it hardly lies in the mouths of hon. Gentlemen, whose other accusation is that I neglect my Parliamentary duties, to say that I do not sufficiently neglect my Parliamentary duties by making visits to Phœnix Park. As a matter of fact, there has not been a period of four or five days free from Irish Business while I have been in Office in which I have not visited Ireland. I think I may now leave that accusation, which, I believe, is only made use of by hon. Members to fill up their speeches, and I come to one on which they have more frequently dilated in this House—namely, the accusation that my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel King-Harman) has been good enough to largely assist me in the matter of answering Questions in this House. Has it ever occurred to hon. Gentlemen to ask themselves what the functions are or ought to be in this House of an Under Secretary? I presume it is to take a part of the Parliamentary work off his official Chief. What part of the work ought to be thus taken off by him from the shoulders of his Chief? It certainly ought to be that which involves the least official responsibility, and there can be no doubt that Questions are at once that part of Parliamentary work which involves the least responsibility, and that part which, undertaken by an Under Secretary, affords the greatest relief which is possible to his official Chief. Do hon. Gentlemen realize what Questions are? The majority of the Questions asked in this House, and especially the majority of Irish Questions, are simply demands for local information, as to what may happen to a particular policeman, or a particular magistrate, or to some other particular individual in some locality in Ireland. These Questions are answered necessarily and avowedly from information derived from Ireland on the spot. Therefore, so far as Questions are concerned—I mean local Questions, Questions for local information—the Minister who answers them has really and absolutely no other function than to give the House the information which he is able to derive from the official source open to him on the spot. I am utterly unable to conceive any Parliamentary duty of less difficulty or entailing less responsibility than that which I have just described. I perfectly admit that there are some Questions of a more particular nature. All Questions presenting the slightest difficulty and involving any questions of policy are talked over by my right hon. and gallant Friend and myself, and we decide together, and I am responsible for the answers that are given in this House. I heard one hon. Gentleman say that the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) reads his answers. Well, of course he reads his answers; every Minister reads his answers; the answers dealing with details are read and ought to be read in this House. It may be that the Under Secretary does not always give all the information hon. Members desire; but I can only say that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman gives them all the information at the disposal of the Irish Office, and were I in the House it would be quite impossible, from the very nature of the case, to give more information than is given by my right hon. and gallant Friend. I make it an invariable practice—a practice which, I think, I have only departed from on one day owing to official business—to be in the House at the end of Question time; and any Questions put to me in regard to policy, and which are not down upon the Paper, I am always ready to answer. I appeal to hon. Gentlemen whether I do not always do my best to answer such Questions efficiently? Having pointed out exactly what the functions are which I have asked my right hon. and gallant Friend to discharge in this House, may I, without being egotistical, ask the Committee to consider what are the duties I have myself to undertake in this House? Hon. Gentlemen have drawn a comparison, as I said before, between me and my Predecessors in Office. I have no desire to measure myself against those Gentlemen as regards qualifications for the Office; that is not my business; but I say this with absolute confidence—that no Irish Secretary has ever had to conduct, in the same space of time, so large and difficult an amount of Irish Business in this House as I have had. Since I came into Office in March, I have been the Minister responsible for the preparation and for the conduct in this House of two enormous Bills—the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and the Irish Land Bill. These Bills have taken up almost the whole time of the House since I came into Office. It would be in vain for anyone to search the records of any previous Chief Secretary to find any occasion upon which a Chief Secretary has been responsible for two great Irish Bills which have occupied anything like the same amount of Parliamentary time. I do not wish to dwell upon this point—it is, perhaps, a rather egotistical one. But let me ask hon. Gentlemen opposite to cast their minds back to the great Irish Bills that have previously occupied the attention of Parliament. What are they? The two greatest that I can recollect have been the Land Bill of 1881 and the Crimes Bill of 1882. Neither the Land Bill of 1881 nor the Crimes Bill of 1882 were in charge of the Chief Secretary of to-day. The Land Act of 1881 was in charge of the Prime Minister, and the Crimes Act of 1882 was in charge of the then Home Secretary; but I have had charge of the two great Bills—the Land Act and the Crimes Act—both of which have been carried this year. Well, Sir, this is all I think it is necessary to say to the Committee in reply to the innumerable attacks which have been made on my conduct since I took Office. I consider the facts I have sketched to the Committee an ample vindication of all I have done. I have, it is true, divided between my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel King-Harman) and myself some of the great burden of Parliamentary work which has been thrown upon the Office. I have asked him to undertake the easiest and least responsible—incomparably the least responsible—part of the work, and I have reserved for myself the most difficult and responsible part of the work. I hope I shall not hear from any impartial person any more of the absurd accusation that I have in any way shirked or scamped the Parliamentary work.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) has gone the length of saying he has given more attention to the conduct of Irish Business during this Session than any previous Chief Secretary for Ireland has ever given in a Session. Now, that is a statement I altogether traverse, for I maintain that, so far from it being true, the right hon. Gentleman has given less of his time and attention to the conduct of Irish Business in this House than any of the Chief Secretaries in the last six years have given. He has spoken of the Land Act of 1881, and of the Coercion Act of 1881. He seems to forget that there was a Crimes Bill, as well as a Land Bill, passed in 1881; that the conduct of the Crimes Bill devolved upon the late Mr. W. E. Forster, and that that right hon. Gentleman had a considerable share in conducting the Land Bill of 1881, which was an infinitely more important measure than the Land Bill which has just been passed. So far as I have observed the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman this Session, he was conspicuous by his absence from this House during the passage of the Crimes Bill. I should like to know where he is during Question time? Does he want us to imagine that he does not scamp the answering of Questions in this House? The conduct of the Crimes Bill practically devolved on Mr. Justice Holmes, then the Attorney General for Ireland, and the Attorney General for England. I do not believe the Chief Secretary himself made more than a dozen speeches on the Bill during the whole of its progress through the House. Contrast his action with that of Mr. Forster in 1881. Mr. Forster spoke dozens of times every night.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That was a Bill of one clause.

MR. M. J. KENNY: I am speaking of the Bill for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, which consisted of many clauses, and occupied more than two months of the Session. The right hon. Gentleman opposite seems to think that he has done extremely well under the circumstances; but we complain that, so far from having done well, he has gone beyond all other Chief Secretaries, and has added to other defects a flippancy of manner, and a general demeanour of insolence towards the Irish Members——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must withdraw that expression.

MR. M. J. KENNY: I meant apparent, Sir.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman must not trifle with the House in this manner.

MR. M. J. KENNY: I obey your ruling at once, Mr. Courtney. We have here an evidence of the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman conducts his Business in this House; and though we may be precluded by the Rules of the House from giving expression to what we feel on the subject, we will never miss an opportunity, outside this House, of stating our opinions in regard to the manner in which the right hon. Gentleman discharges his duties, and in regard to the manner in which he acts towards Irish Members. I have condemned the right hon. Gentleman's inattention to the Business of this House. I have shown that he has differed in his course of action from all previous Chief Secretaries. Other Chief Secretaries before his time have been at least careful to attend in their places in order to hear and answer Questions addressed to him by the Irish Members. They did not act upon the miserable plea that the Questions addressed to them were of a local character. They did not declare themselves, as he declares himself, or as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet shows himself, the mere mouthpiece of the police. I have mentioned cases of previous Chief Secretaries, which stand in extraordinary contrast to the case of the present Chief Secretary. I have reminded the Committee of the course of action of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan)—whom we of course criticized as we criticize the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour), and as we shall criticize every Chief Secretary so long as they continue to act in the manner in which they have acted for years past—and I have drawn a comparison between that right hon. Gentleman and the Member for East Manchester. Why we particularly complain of the latter is that he is an aggravation of everything most disagreeable in previous Chief Secretaries. On many occasions we criticized the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division; but he, at least, did not consent to make himself a mere mouthpiece of the police. He frequently instituted independent inquiries when he had reason to suspect that the answers of the magistrates, and the police, and other officials were faulty, and not to be depended upon. It may be all very well to sneer at Questions with regard to magistrates and the police; but it must be borne in mind that the magistrates and the police are the real governors in Ireland. It is the magistrates and the police who have, at the present time, and who have had for a dozen years past, the lives and liberties of Irishmen in their hands. [*Laughter.*] It is all very well for the Chief Secretary to laugh at that. Those persons are not less important in Ireland, in their localities, and are not less capable of doing mischief, even than the right hon. Gentleman himself. Now, I should not have referred to the attitude and the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman in his capacity of Chief Secretary if he had not got up in his place and attempted, in a very lame fashion, to defend his attitude and conduct. He has, in his defence, particularly in regard to his want of attention to Questions in this House, stated that there is less responsibility attaching to the matter of replying to Questions put in the House than to any other branch of the business of Chief Secretary. Now, I traverse that statement. There are in this House three Ministers responsible for one Department. I have never noticed that the Secretary of State for War sends a substitute to answer a serious Question in regard to the War Department. The Secretary for War is always in his place, and previous Secretaries for War have always been in their places when Questions were put. Then, again, the Home Secretary is always in his place, not only the present Home Secretary, but previous Home Secretaries; and when their subordinates have come forward to answer Questions they have always done so with an apology—they have always asked permission to answer the Question. The present Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland, however, whenever a Question is addressed to the Chief Secretary, rushes up to the Table, and without an apology or anything of the kind proceeds to read out his reply. I am glad to see that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary is in his place. He has this advantage over the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—namely, that he has some slight knowledge of Irish affairs. There is a question I wish to put to him, and I trust that he will do me the honour to answer it. I will not put it to the Chief Secretary, as probably it will relate to a subject about which he knows nothing. It arises under this Vote, and it is with reference to the manner in which the Veterinary Inspectors' Department in Dublin Castle is managed. There have been Reports supplied to that Department from time to time with regard to the prevalence of pleuro-pneumonia in Ireland. The Reports go to prove that the disease continues not only to exist, but even to grow in intensity in the neighbourhood of the City of Dublin. Now, that is a very serious question for persons engaged in the Irish cattle trade; because, in consequence, restrictions frequently have to be enforced—the export of Irish cattle from the Port of Dublin—and the result is that the English and Irish dealers are afraid to purchase Irish cattle, lest they should infect healthy cattle in England and Scotland. Now we have had Reports supplied to us this year, and we have had Reports supplied to us for the past two or three years on this subject; and though the allegation is that efforts are being made to cope with this disease, that still the authorities are unable to prevent its growth. Well, those Veterinary Inspectors are the persons on whom the duty principally devolves of checking the growth of this disease. These Veterinary Inspectors are armed with considerable powers under the Act of 1878, and it remains mainly with the Boards of Guardians to put in force the remaining powers of the Act in order to set it thoroughly in operation. These Boards of Guardians are bodies in the North and South Dublin Unions upon whom pressure could easily be brought to bear by the Chief Secretary, if he chose to exercise his authority. It is said, however, that greater powers should be placed in the Veterinary Department, in order to enable them to stamp out this disease. The stamping out of the disease can only be brought about by slaughtering the cattle under the Act of 1878, and going to the expense of compensating the owners for the cattle destroyed. Surely it is more desirable to go to that expense than to let the disease continue to exist, inflicting, as it does, enormous damage to the general cattle trade in Ireland. I want to know whether the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant will devote his attention to this question, and see if a very short Bill cannot be passed through this House for giving the further powers required to enable the Veterinary Inspectors to order the compulsory slaughter of cattle infected by this disease in the neighbourhood of Dublin and other parts of Ireland—to enable them to stamp out a disease which is doing an incalculable amount of damage in Ireland? Probably this is too small a matter for the exalted mind of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to deal with; but the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary knows something about Dublin, and may probably be aware of the trouble and loss consequent upon this disease, and I would ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to distinguish his term of Office by, at least, one useful act. I would ask him to do what he can to enable the Veterinary Inspectors to stamp out this disease which is doing so much harm.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): There is one thing quite certain in connection with this discussion, whatever may be doubtful in it, and that is that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has a comfortable opinion of himself. Well, Sir, I do not feel much concerned to dispute it. After having heard his eloquent and, to his own mind, conclusive account of his extraordinary qualifications for the Office which he happens to fill at present, I turn with some surprise to a statement which he made at an earlier period of the evening, to the effect that he received valuable assistance and advice from the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. I should have thought that a statesman so rarely qualified to fill an official position as he describes himself to be would not be content to fall back for assistance and advice on so ordinary a politician as the Lord Lieutenant. I differ entirely from the right hon. Gentleman as to the importance to us and to our country of receiving, when we put Questions in this House, answers from the Minister who is directly responsible for the affairs of Ireland. We cannot, Sir, bring in Bills and bring forward Motions when we please. As we are situated, the method of interrogation is the readiest and most effective method we can avail ourselves of for endeavouring to right our grievances. It is by putting Questions from day to day that we are able to challenge in this House the action of Irish officials, from the Judge himself down to the lowest constable. But it is necessary for the satisfaction of our grievances that the answers on this subject should be given by a Minister, who, being a Member of the Cabinet and one of the immediate Advisers of the Crown, is in a position to state with authority what policy will be pursued by the Government. I have often heard the Parliamentary Under Secretary lumbering through his replies in this House. I do not quarrel with the information which dictates his replies, because whoever answers a Question the information must be the same; but I do object to having Questions, not only as to matters of fact, but as to matters of policy, constantly answered in the House by a Minister who so often excuses himself from giving answers on Questions of policy on the plea that they do not come within the range of his Office. It is reducing the practice of questioning to a nullity and a farce, so far as the public are concerned, if a Minister is able to plead that he is not vested with that responsibility which enables him to give a complete answer. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary excuses himself for not giving answers with regard to what is going on in Ireland by stating that he has to attend to his duties here, and that they take up so much of his time that he is not able to attend to those in Ireland. Well, Sir, we complain that he does not attend to his duties, and also that he does not take pains to inform himself as to what is going on in Ireland. I have often noticed the picturesque form of the right hon. Gentleman behind that wooden arrangement at the Speaker's back, carefully waiting until Question time is over before presenting himself. I have noticed how he has waited until the Speaker has announced that "the Clerk of the House will now proceed to read the Orders of the Day," and until the first Order has been read out, before attending in his place on the Front Ministerial Bench. Well, Sir, in my opinion, that is a gross malfeasance of duty; and no degree of self-assertion on the part of the right hon. Gentleman can gloss over the fact that he constantly and by habit evades the performance of that duty which has been regarded by his Predecessors as their principal duty. It happens that past Chief Secretaries have been converted by the Questions which have been put to them, and by the knowledge they have derived of the condition of things existing in Ireland. I believe that almost every Gentleman who now occupies a seat in this House—except the right hon. Gentleman himself—who has occupied the post of Chief Secretary, has, by the force of his official experience, become converted in his views as to the proper course to be pursued in Ireland. Those right hon. Gentlemen, as, indeed, most people in this country, have come to look with favour upon Irish agitators, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite is mistaken if he thinks that the altered feeling with regard to Irish National Leaders is peculiar to Irish Members at present in the House. He will find Daniel O'Connell and Mr. Isaac Butt, for whom he has no better names than murderers, occupying at this moment prominent places in your galleries of celebrities, and the time may come when he may admire and when this country may bestow similar honourable distinction upon us. Judging from the changes of mind that English Governments have gone through with regard to successive generations of Irish politicians, I think that if another few years should happen to pass before the Irish militant case is closed in triumph, that they may find amongst Irish politicians of later days that even my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) is a moderate and polite agitator. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) finds fault with us on the ground that we have not a sympathetic perception of the good qualities of our political opponents. Well, Sir, in the remarks I am now about to address to the Committee, I shall not attempt to deal with politics so much as with facts. I think the moment has come when we must challenge the Minister responsible for the affairs of Ireland to offer such explanation as he can of the use the Irish Executive have made of the powers vested in them under the 5th section of the Coercion Act of this year. The Committee will observe that it is necessary under the Act, not only that crime should prevail in any district that is proclaimed, but also that that crime should have attached to it the character of outrage. Now, it is under the guarantee of the language of this clause that the House passed the Coercion Act. We were assured that the Lord Lieutenant would take the advice of the Privy Council, and that the section would only be applied to districts in Ireland where the powers conveyed by the Proclamation were necessary for the detection, prevention, and punishment of crime and outrage. It was declared by Ministers in this House from time to time that the complexion of outrage should be attached to the crimes proclaimed. I could quote many of these utterances; but will content myself with referring to the observations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary during the progress of the debates on the Crimes Bill on the 27th of June. He said—

> "We hope that the area of Ireland over which it will ever be necessary to use it will be but a small part of the country; we hope that for years together it may be possible to allow the Bill to remain quiescent."—(3 *Hansard*, [316] 1068.)

Mr. Sexton

What I have to ask, in the first instance, is this—what has occurred in the condition of Ireland since the 27th of June to entitle the right hon. Gentleman to abandon that hope, and to depart from the line of policy which the expression of that hope entitled the House to expect? Now, the Coercion Act passed into law and received the Queen's Assent on the 19th of July. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who, four weeks before, had expressed the hope that for many years the Bill would remain quiescent, and would never be applied except to a small part of Ireland, two days after the Bill received the Royal Assent apparently changed his opinion, and sped to Dublin. He did not even wait for a copy of the Act. I think it was my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) who pointed out on a previous occasion that when the Lord Lieutenant proceeded under the 5th clause to apply the drastic powers of the Act, the majority of the people of Ireland had not before them a copy of the Statute, as none had been issued by the public Press. The right hon. Gentleman did not consult the Lord Lieutenant or the Privy Council when he arrived in Ireland, but retired to his Lodge in Phœnix Park. He saw in private some magistrates—he was guilty of the un-Constitutional course of consulting in private, with regard to the suspension of the liberties of the people, a number of magistrates who will afterwards in the course of their duty have to deal with, and perhaps send to prison, the very men with regard to whom the powers given under the Proclamation is to be applied. The magistrates are first consulted as to whether a certain organization and certain individuals shall be brought within the provisions of the special Criminal Law; and these gentlemen having given the advice that the ordinary law ought to be suspended, and that the special Criminal Law ought to be applied—these men with whom he has consulted in his Star Chamber at Phœnix Park are to be the very men to administer justice under that Act. That evening, Sir, determined the liberties of the people of Ireland. When Friday evening came the right hon. Gentleman had determined to put Ireland outside the pale of the Constitution. Why, Sir, we are living under a personal Government.

Talk of the Government of the Queen, talk of the Three Estates of the Realm, they have no existence for us! The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary exercises a power as absolute as any Pasha in Turkey or any Mandarin in China. On the Saturday the Lord Lieutenant arrived in Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman said he consulted him; but the Lord Lieutenant spent Friday night tossing in the Channel. The right hon. Gentleman says he saw him on Saturday morning at 12 o'clock, and not only met him, but got his opinion and advice; but will the right hon. Gentleman say that any advice he got from the Lord Lieutenant had any effect upon the decision which he and his *sbirri* had arrived at? Now, the Privy Council consists of 50 persons, but only 11 Members out of the 50 were present when the Proclamation was issued. There was the right hon. Gentleman himself as Dictator—there was the Lord Lieutenant who played into his hands, and the Commander of the Forces, Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, a polite and gallant gentleman who, whenever he goes into the society of ladies suspected of National sympathies, excuses himself for having signed the Proclamation. We know, of course, that the Commander of the Forces, very properly considering his profession, is nothing if not a soldier. I would go further and say he is a soldier, and nothing else. He cares nothing for public life, but he is bound to obey the orders received from others. There were four other Members of the Privy Council present—four Tory lawyers—namely, the Chancellor, the Ex-Chancellor, Dr. Ball, the Vice Chancellor, and Mr. Justice Monroe, four gentlemen who have climbed to dignity, emolument, and power by political services rendered to the Party opposite. The right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland told us on the 15th June that the Judges were never consulted; but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland went further, for he told us that there was no consultation on this occasion, and he added, moreover, this very curious phrase—that "when a matter of this kind is brought forward it is never debated;" Judges were there to give solemnity to him. Surely even the Chancellor of the Exchequer will agree that the Chief Secretary is solemn enough for anyone, and that he wants no judicial aid to make him more funereal than nature has already made him. These four Judges were there, and we are asked to believe that these four judicial persons and the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary sat for two hours round that Table, that they said nothing to the Chief Secretary, that the Chief Secretary said nothing to the Lord Lieutenant, and that they said nothing to one another. [An hon. MEMBER: They were mutes!] Yes; we are asked to believe that they were mutes at the funeral of the League. Of course, we cannot penetrate the Privy Council Chamber, but we know what came out of it; we know what was the promise of the 27th June; but when we arrived at the 23rd July it was upon that day determined to apply the provisions of the Act to every inch of the soil of Ireland; first of all to apply the first four clauses to 18 counties of Ireland. The Committee will remember the drastic powers contained in the first four clauses; and these powers were applied on the instant to the whole Province of Munster, to the whole Province of Connaught, to half the Province of Leinster, and to two counties of the Province of Ulster. I observe, however, as a curious fact, that while the heavier Proclamation was applied to all counties that returned Nationalist Members, the lighter Proclamation was applied to those counties which returned Unionist or Tory Members. The Act says nothing about counties; it says that when the Lord Lieutenant is satisfied it is necessary for the prevention of crime and outrage he may apply the provisions of the Act to "any such district." No one can say that a district means a county. The right hon. Gentleman was challenged why he made in every case the area of Proclamation a county; and what was his reply?

> "The Government have resolved to proclaim no smaller area than a county, because a county appears the most convenient unit for administrative purposes."

Popular liberty is a mere idle phrase; the phrase now is "a convenient unit." The County of Cork contains 500,000 people, and Donegal 200,000. The liberty of these men is as dear to them as to any of you. The Act declares that unless a district is in a state of crime and outrage it should not be proclaimed;

but you ignore the phraseology of the Act, and proclaim a county with 500,000 people, and deprive them of the right of association, of public meeting, and of fair trial by jury, and other rights, and justify these acts by the circumstance that in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, who is a man of Oriental feeling and disposition, a county "is the most convenient unit for administrative purposes." It was easier for him on that Friday evening in his Lodge at Phœnix Park to issue one Proclamation for a county than to issue Proclamations for six districts. There are other units —a county is one, a barony is another, a half barony another, a Poor Law Union another, a Poor Law district another, and an electoral division another. But why not choose a higher unit? Why not go as high as a Province, or treat the whole of Ireland at once as a unit for administrative purposes? He goes on to say—

> "It therefore happens that while the statistics of crime for the county may seem satisfactory, they are not, since they really indicate a serious state of things in a relatively small area that calls for increased stringency in the administration of the law."

What does that mean? It means that though crime may be small, the crime may be congested in a district; and therefore, though the Act speaks only of a district, you ought to proclaim the whole county. He illustrated that in reference to the case of Donegal. He said that—"Although the crime for Donegal is not considerable, the barony of Kilmacrennan is not satisfactory." I turn to the record of crime for the quarter ending June—that is to say, I turn to the record that must have been before the right hon. Gentleman himself when he determined to proclaim the county, in order to find, if I can, some justification or some excuse for the proclamation of the county, and I find the crime committed in the whole county for the quarter ending June was three in number. There was an incendiary fire, a threatening letter, and there was an injury to property; and I suppose, Sir, these three crimes were in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman when he said —"They indicate a serious state of things that specially calls for increased stringency." It is not even alleged that in regard to these three crimes there was a failure of justice. I have not heard anyone say they had any evidence with regard to them, or that it was forthcoming, or that there was any difficulty in procuring a conviction. The barony of Kilmacrennan is only one-sixth of Donegal; the county contains six baronies with 200,000 inhabitants; three crimes were committed in three months, and these the three months preceding the Proclamation. But the right hon. Gentleman, by his Proclamation in respect of these three crimes, decreed that from the date of the Proclamation, if any crime was committed in any part of Donegal with its 200,000 inhabitants—and observe crime is not merely felony or misdemeanour, but any of the made-up crimes introduced into the Act—if any offence technically known as crime is committed the right hon. and learned Gentleman who sits so placidly opposite, the Attorney General for Ireland, would be able to despatch two magistrates to hold a Star Chamber, to summon anyone before it, whether anyone was charged or not, to deny any witness Constitutional rights, to commit anyone to prison for an unsatisfactory answer, and to send anyone to prison from time to time at their discretion. That is the effect of applying the 1st clause. The 2nd clause was applied, and under that it is what is called a criminal conspiracy to interfere with any person with regard to the hire, or use, or occupation of land, and other matters defined by the 2nd sub-section, and the right of trial by jury is taken away. By the application of the 3rd clause, a trial may be removed to any other county. And by the application of the 4th clause the accused person is deprived of trial by jury, and the trial of a peasant is given into the hands of 12 landlords, and of a Catholic into the hands of 12 Protestants. That is the effect of the Proclamation in County Donegal, and the only justification is that three crimes were committed in this county in three months. That is only one of the 18 counties where this happened. The other county I refer to in Ulster is the county of Monaghan. Between the date of the right hon. Gentleman's pledge on the 27th June that this Act might remain quiescent for years, between that date and the 23rd July the Summer Assizes had occurred; and did that offer any evidence in support of the right hon. Gentleman's conduct? I refer to the Assizes in the county of

Monaghan. This county has been proclaimed under the first four clauses. The going Judge of Assize last month was Mr. Justice Holmes, who, as Attorney General for Ireland, piloted the Coercion Bill through this House. On going Circuit, he received a pair of white gloves at the first town, and here are the words in which Mr. Justice Holmes addressed the Grand Jury—

> "Mr. Hamilton and Gentlemen, there are two cases to go before you. The Calendar is perfectly light. In turning from these cases to those cases which have been reported to the Constabulary, the amount of cases so reported is indicative of the peaceful and prosperous state of this county. I am justified in congratulating the county on the absence of crime."

Observe not merely on the lightness of the Calendar, but in regard to the lightness and condition of crime as it appeared in the Report of the police. The Chief Secretary says he is guided by the opinion of the officers of police. and no officer is better informed than the local Inspector of Police. It was on the report of that responsible officer that Mr. Justice Holmes, the pilot of the Coercion Bill, gave that account of the condition of Monaghan. As a matter of fact, they have only two offences—there was a threatening letter and an injury to property, and upon that the learned Judge so justly commented. It is in face of that just comment and just eulogy of the county that his Colleague and Co-partner in the administration of Ireland proclaimed the county of Monaghan under the first four clauses. What is the advantage of being crimeless in Ireland? Virtue may be its own reward; but we might have expected from the Constitutional Rulers some better reward than this, and I say that in presence of a blank Calendar, and almost a blank Police Report, they might have been saved the indignity that has been showered on their heads. The right hon. Gentleman said that no county had been proclaimed except for crime or intimidation, and before I pass from the subject of crime let me refer to the Report for the quarter ending June. Taking out threatening letters the Report shows the total number of agrarian offences in all Ireland to have been 131. In four counties there was no crime, in nine counties there was one crime each, in three counties there were two crimes each, and in four counties three crimes each. There you have a condition of absolute crimelessness or nominal crime in 20 counties in Ireland. Yet this condition of crimelessness did not save them from the suspension and withdrawal of all the guarantees of the English Constitution. The right hon. Gentleman said that counties had been proclaimed for intimidation, and in respect of intimidation our pressure on the Government and repeated accusations has revealed the fact that they found themselves entirely upon the Return of Boycotting and persons protected by the police. Now, Sir, I denounce the Return of Boycotting and police protection as an immoral contrivance. I attach no weight to it, and I appeal to the Committee and to the public to do the same. Let me ask the Committee to say whether, if the meanest man in Britain was on his trial, would you ask any magistrate to convict that man on evidence which denied to the consideration of the magistrate or the jury those weapons of evidence which are held to be essential to the establishment of the lightest allegation of crime? We have columns of figures here; we are told there are so many people Boycotted in one county and so many protected by the police in another. The Committee have not forgotten the pungent and conclusive speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo last night. He pointed out that Boycotting was a money-making trade in Ireland, and broken-down farmers and others are glad to be Boycotted and protected by the police in order that they may lodge the police and charge the Government a rack-rent and give no abatement upon it; they supply the police with provisions, goods, and sometimes luxuries, and the bill is paid by the Government without a murmur and without inquiry. These persons who are said to be Boycotted are better off under the Boycotting system than ever they were before or ever hope to be again in their lives. The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland challenged me last night on a contention as to a matter of fact, and the contention has been left out of *The Times;* but curiously enough, as my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford has observed, when a statement is made that is damaging to the Parliamentary Under Secretary it does not appear in *The Times* next morning. What I say is, that we are entitled to have the names of these persons who are Boycotted and protected. I pointed out to the Government that the condition of Boycotting and police protection is invariably conducted with such publicity that no injury can be done to the person affected by announcing his name and address. My hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo went further, and justly so, as he took a keener view of the case than I did, and he pointed out clearly that Boycotting and police protection involved absolute publicity, and that if the Government went further and gave the names, that might afford these Boycotted persons a measure of sympathy of which they were at present destitute. [An hon. MEMBER : The Curtins, for instance.] As an hon. Friend remarks, there was the example of the Curtin case. The case was published in *The Times* and other English newspapers, with the result that a subscription was started, a liberal sum was collected, and the Curtin family received favour and sympathy which they would never have had but for the publicity that was given to their case. Even the originator of the name, Captain Boycott, received thousands of pounds in consequence of the publicity his case met with; therefore, why should the Government, upon this delusive plea that secrecy is necessary, refuse to us the names of these people, and, at the same time, refuse to these people the sympathy and help that would be given from various parts of the United Kingdom, if the circumstances of the case should reveal that they were suffering hardship? The Parliamentary Under Secretary denied that he said that persons who received constant protection from the police are always protected by them.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): No.

MR. SEXTON : This is getting complicated. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman denied it last night, and now he denies that he denied it last night.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN : I will state what I stated twice last night. I said that entire police protection meant that the persons were always protected and that in most cases they were protected in their houses; but I also stated there were many cases where the police did not live in the houses, in consequence of their being unfit to afford them habitation.

MR. SEXTON : I am entirely satisfied for that makes my case the stronger. These people then, Sir, who are under constant police protection, are always protected; the police, when the houses are good enough, live in the houses; when not good enough, they live somewhere else; therefore, the protection is matter of notoriety, and that every man, woman, and child in the district knows it. Again, I ask upon what pretence are the names and addresses of these persons refused, and the circumstances of their cases withheld? It is certainly not for the purpose of protecting them. I suppose the Rules of the House would prevent me imputing motives to the Government; but I say I believe the motive behind them is this—that this is a false case; that this is a bogus case; that these numbers do not correspond with the facts; that these people are not Boycotted; and if protected, they are protected for their own interests. There is no pretence whatever for the protection of these people. Then there are others who are protected by the presence of the police. Is it not obvious that when the police at different times in the 24 hours visit the place, that everyone in the district is familiar with the fact; and with regard to persons wholly Boycotted, is it not the very climax of absurdity to imagine they are not known? The Government tell us that persons wholly Boycotted in Ireland are persons for whom no one in their neighbourhood will work, supply goods to, or have any intercourse with; therefore we have set before us by the Government the picture of a man in Ireland living in a state of moral and physical assassination, for no one will have any intercourse with him, or do anything for him. I very much doubt if such a state of things exists with regard to a tithe of the persons mentioned; but, suppose it does, why not tell us where it is? If no one in the district will speak to a person, everyone in the district must know it, and therefore the thing cannot be more public than it is. The only reason the facts are withheld from the Irish Members here is that if you stated it you would knock the bottom out of your vicious case. There are then the people who are partially Boycotted;

they are not altogether unable to buy necessaries; they find someone to bow to them, or to speak to them, and to buy from or sell to; but surely that constitutes a condition of notorious publicity. If everyone knows that to be the fact, there is a condition of absolute notoriety as between the persons who will talk to them and to those who will not. I say that never in the history of the world before did any Constitutional Ministry, on such a monstrous plea, take away the liberties of the people. This Return is not worth the paper it is printed on; it is as false as it is foolish. Note that this is the kind of evidence on which the people are being outlawed in 18 counties in Ireland. Almost empty Calendars, empty Police Reports, and anonymous Returns of Boycotting and police protection; and upon that kind of fabricated evidence, manufactured by your instruments, you have denied to 18 counties in Ireland the right of open fiat, instituted the Star Chamber amongst them, and enabled two of your paid servants to send anyone for six months to gaol for delivering a speech to the people upon political affairs. A man has a right in England to combine with his fellows not to work for a person they regard as an enemy, to conserve to themselves their means of living—if you interfered with them as you have done in Ireland, they would tumble you head-over-heels off that Bench in 24 hours; but if anyone in Ireland did these things, any two of your servants who draw their salaries by your favour, who live by your favour, may send these people for six months, with hard labour, to prison for doing what is jealously and strictly guarded by the Constitution in England. Well, these 18 counties are not only denied all this, as I have said, but the people, for offences under this Act, are denied trial by a jury of their peers; they are to be tried by a special jury, and may be removed to any other place in Ireland. And why is this? I ask the Attorney General for Ireland if it has been alleged on the part of the Government that in these 18 counties evidence has been withheld; has it been alleged by your Crown prosecutors or agents that evidence has been withheld; has it been said that people had evidence, and failed to come before the tribunals? I am able to say, from the Returns of agrarian offences, that these offences are mostly slight in their nature; they are divided between incendiary fires, injury to property, writing threatening letters, and firing into dwellings. These offences are committed in the dead of night, in lonely places; there is no one in the teeming population who is aware of the offence, and you take care they shall not be. I say evidence has not been withheld. We are sometimes told that mutilation of animals is an offence peculiar to Ireland, and there are reasons which account for this in Ireland. But I have here some Returns of crime in England for the year 1885, and I find that there were 33 cases of mutilation of animals. Now, in the case of Ireland, you appear to think that unless a criminal is brought to justice for every crime there is something wrong in the social state of the country. Now, of these 33 cases of mutilation of animals in England, how many convictions were there? Would anyone like to guess? There were 33 crimes, and nine convictions. It is, as I said before, owing to the secret nature of the crimes, although everyone is anxious to give evidence, and to bring the criminals to justice, it is extremely difficult to obtain a conviction, and the failure to obtain a conviction is not an offence to be denounced against a whole people. As I am speaking of England, I may say that the number of cases of cruelty to animals in 1885 was nearly 8,000. I am not anxious to make these comparisons; but they are thrust upon us. These offences, when they occur in Ireland, are spoken of as an indignity and an insult, as if there were no such offences anywhere else. In Ireland, there were 240 acquittals and 1,260 committals for cruelty to animals. And why? Because these things take place in open day. When an offence is committed in Ireland in the presence of people who can give evidence, it is as easy to obtain a conviction as anywhere else. Does the Attorney General say that juries fail in their duty? [The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Gibson) (Liverpool, Walton) assented.] He does. I challenged him the other day, and he returned an answer which, while it professed to exhibit a certain opinion in his mind, denied any facilities for testing the truth of that opinion. I asked him, in regard to the Summer Assizes, whether any Assizes had been adjourned or cases postponed because of the failure of juries to perform their duty? The right hon. and learned Gentleman had to deal with 32 counties; and he mentioned Clare and Kerry, where two or three cases had been postponed because the Judge was not satisfied; and he referred to one or two cases in a third county, but he did not state the cases. Now, treating the cases of the right hon. and learned Gentleman as good, what becomes of them? In two counties there were two or three postponements, and in a third county there was one case. But does a jury always obey a Judge in England? When a Judge in England indicates that, in his opinion, a prisoner is guilty, is a verdict of guilty always returned by the jury? Not at all. The right of juries to differ from the Judges is the principal reason for their existence. If a jury is always expected to agree with a Judge, why do you want your juries at all? Would it not be much more convenient, and a great saving of public time, if you simply confined the trial of every criminal case to the Judge alone? I cannot discover on what ground otherwise juries are to be condemned. Very often a jury in England which differs from a Judge is eulogized as a public benefactor; but in Ireland whenever a jury ventures to differ from a Judge—however lurid a light the past career of the Judge may cast upon his antecedents, however recently he may have been Crown Prosecutor, he may be a disappointed Home Ruler; but, no matter what he is, we may have refused him a seat on this side of the House—no sooner, I say, does a Judge find fault with the verdict of a jury, than that is made the basis of an outcry in the Press of this country against the Irish people. There is no case—either in regard to withholding of evidence, or to the conduct of witnesses or juries—which entitles you to come down to any one of these 18 counties, and to take upon yourselves the power to change the venue, or to take trials out of the hands of common juries, and put them in the hands of special juries. I doubt if you can bring forward one solitary case to that effect at any of the Summer Assizes, and I am absolutely certain you cannot establish the shadow of a case to give you any ground for the action you have taken. I do not think this Committee is aware of the fact—and it is an undoubted fact—that convictions in criminal cases in Ireland have not been facilitated by coercion. Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman (the Attorney General for Ireland) think they have? I have no doubt hon. Gentlemen opposite think that, while it is difficult to obtain a conviction in criminal cases in Ireland under the ordinary law, you will obtain them with greater facility under a system of coercion. I shall prove the contrary in five minutes. In the year 1881 you had a Coercion Act in Ireland—the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act. It gave you great facilities for the discovery of evidence, because it enabled you to arrest any man without a warrant and without charge, and to keep him in gaol as long as you liked. What was the result that year? For every 21 agrarian offences committed you had only one conviction, and in nine-tenths of the cases there was no one made amenable to justice. In 1882 you had two Coercion Acts running tandem—you had Mr. Forster's Act up to December 30, and you had the Crimes Act of 1882, from the 12th July. No one needs to be reminded of the power of the Act of 1882. They were powers of an extraordinary character and of extraordinary rigour, not only enabling the Attorney General to change the place of trial, and to conduct trials before a Commission of three Judges, instead of before a jury, but empowering the police to arrest all persons found abroad after sunset and before sunrise, and enabling a blood tax to be levied on a district, not only on account of extra police employed, but also on account of compensation to anyone injured. If any Act for the repression and prevention of crime could have been effectual, the Code embodied in that Act would have been effectual. Now, in this year of two Coercion Acts, you had only one conviction for every 24 agrarian offences. You are always saying two things. First, that coercion vindicates justice and brings guilty men to the gallows and to the gaol; and, secondly, that Leagues are stained with blood, that they are the producers of crime, and that where they exist it is impossible to vindicate justice. I will prove the falsehood of both these statements. In 1881 you had one conviction to every 21 agrarian offences; in 1882 you had only one to every 24. Passing on for a couple of years, and coming to 1884, when you had a Crimes Act still in operation, the convictions were one in 21, and in nine-tenths of the cases no person was made amenable to justice. In 1885 you had a Coercion Act in force up to August, and there was one conviction to every 18 cases. For the 15 months following up to March last you had no Coercion Act. You had a public League, and the convictions were one in 18 cases; and if, as was the case in 1881 in nine-tenths of the cases, no one had been made amenable to justice, the number of these cases would have been 1,107, whereas it was only 1,103. Therefore I have conclusively proved my case; and I would ask the Attorney General for Ireland to disprove, if he can, my two assertions—that convictions have been more numerous when Ireland was not coerced, and when public Leagues existed, and that they have been less numerous under the Coercion Acts of 1881 and 1882. Now, I will refer for a moment to a secondary matter—namely, the 14 remaining counties in Ireland, which were proclaimed under the 2nd section of the Coercion Act of this year, which deals with "forcible opposition, and assaults upon ministers of the law," as they are called. When the Chief Secretary for Ireland was questioned as to why he proclaimed these 14 counties, he said that these provisions ought to be part of the general law. But that was not what he said when he was passing the Bill through this House. On the 27th of June he said he hoped that "for years to come the Bill would remain quiescent." [MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What?] That "for years to come he hoped the Bill would remain quiescent." He said—

> "We hope that the area of Ireland over which it will ever be necessary to use it will be but a small part of the country. We hope that for years together it may be possible to allow the Bill to remain quiescent."—(3 *Hansard*, [316] 1068.)

[MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Hear, hear!] What has happened since to disturb that hope? Has the condition of Ireland grown worse? Has crime increased? Is the condition of Ireland more disturbed than in June? What about the Summer Assizes? Why, on all former occasions of the application of coercion, and the passing of coercion measures through this House, the staple of the arguments of the Government was comprised in quotations from Her Majesty's Judges. They were given by the foot and by the yard. Can you quote a majority of the Judges now? I defy you to quote more than one, and he is a Judge who is now the agent of those who sit on that side of the House, because we would not allow him to sit on this side of the House. Now the hope of the 27th of June has vanished into thin air. The Bill was to remain quiescent.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Will the hon. Member read the words? I said I hoped that for years together it might not be necessary to use the Bill. I did not specify the exact period during which the Bill would not be used.

MR. SEXTON: Well, Sir, I can only say that if that be the method of interpretation which the right hon. Gentleman wishes the British public to accept, he had better for the future bring his speeches before the British public accompanied and fortified with a glossary. Could anyone have imagined the interpretation which the right hon. Gentleman now wishes us to put upon his words—

> "We hope that the area of Ireland over which it will ever be necessary to use it will be but a small part of Ireland. We hope that for many years together it may be possible to allow the Bill to remain quiescent."

Could anyone have imagined that the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman was not that for years to come the Bill should not be used, but that the Bill should be used now, and that in the dim and distant future some year might come when the Bill should remain quiescent? [*Laughter.*] The Chief Secretary for Ireland is trying to look amused; but the Chancellor of the Exchequer beside him looks grave. I do not wonder at it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer is more sensible and more experienced in the effect of interpretations of that character on the minds of the public at a period of contested elections. "This provision," said the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, "ought to be part of the general law." What provision? Taking away the right of trial by jury with regard to women and children who might come in the way of a constable, or with regard to a man who, in a period of excitement, might be betrayed into an assault on what is called a "minister of the law." These are the provisions to which I am now referring, and which the right hon. Gentleman says ought to be made the provisions of the general law. What would Englishmen say to a proposal that they should be made a part of the general law of England? I should like to see the sort of political meetings there would be in London, if you took away the right of trial by jury.

Mr. AMBROSE (Middlesex, Harrow): I rise to Order, Sir. I submit that the question of coercion has been settled by this House, and during this Session; and I submit, further, Sir, that it has no reference to the Vote now under discussion.

Several Irish Members: What is the Vote?

The CHAIRMAN: The Question before the House is the salary and expenses of the Office of the Chief Secretary. The hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) is arraigning the action of the Chief Secretary in issuing certain Proclamations under the Crimes Act.

Mr. AMBROSE: Mr. Courtney, Sir.

Several hon. Members: Order, order!

The CHAIRMAN (continuing): He is investigating the adequacy or the inadequacy of the grounds on which those Proclamations were issued; and, though he is doing it at very great length, I do not feel called upon to interfere.

Mr. AMBROSE: Will you allow me to suggest, Sir——

Several hon. Members: Name, name!

Mr. AMBROSE: Without intending for a moment, Sir, to question your ruling, may I venture to point out, with the indulgence of the House——

Several hon. Members: Name, name! *and* Order!

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I shall have to name hon. Members in that quarter (the Opposition Benches below the Gangway) if they do not allow the hon. and learned Gentleman to proceed.

Mr. AMBROSE: I venture to point out, Sir, that these questions have been discussed and have been settled by this House, and that whether the Chief Secretary was right or wrong his action has been endorsed by this House, and that the question of that action does not arise on the Vote under discussion. I think something is due to this House in order that our time may not be wasted by discussions which are utterly irrelevant to the Vote now before the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: The House has undoubtedly agreed that, under certain circumstances, the Chief Secretary should act in a certain way; but it reserves to itself, at all times, the right to decide whether the Executive Government has realized the circumstances under which it may act.

Mr. SEXTON: Your time may be wasted; but our liberties are destroyed. I am not surprised that the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Ambrose) should be able to devote so much time to the proceedings of this House, owing to his lack of practice at the Bar.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must be aware that remarks of that character are not at all conducive to the due despatch of Public Business.

Mr. SEXTON: I accept your advice, Sir; but, according to your ruling, I have been needlessly interrupted. There can be no more properly Constitutional occasion than on the salary of a Minister to raise a question as to the policy pursued by that Minister. Well, I was speaking of the 14 counties. The Chief Secretary for Ireland said these provisions ought to be part of the general law. I call that a monstrous proposition. What makes it extraordinary, and almost incredible, is this—that these offences, in respect of which these provisions ought to be part of the general law, have not been committed in any one of these counties during the present year. Two things are indispensable to justify the Proclamation of these 14 counties. First, it must be shown that these offences have prevailed; secondly, it must be shown that the ordinary administration of the law has failed to bring the guilty persons to justice. Neither of these things has been shown. There is just one other point. The Chief Secretary has proclaimed 18 counties, and not content with that Proclamation, he proclaimed also the 10 cities in Ireland which have a separate criminal jurisdiction. Well, I will just read two or three sentences from the charges of the Judges at the Assizes in these cities last month; and I think if anything be wanted to convince the most determined Tory of the wanton and reckless spirit—a spirit of indiscriminate tyranny—in which the powers of this Act are exercised, he will find it in the few words which I am now about to quote. First, I will take Mr. Justice O'Brien in the City of Cork, and there is no Judge in Ireland who would be more ready to make a case for coercion if he could. He said—

> "This city is absolutely and entirely free from crime. This is not the first time I have had to make the observation that the city has enjoyed, even within my own experience, an entire immunity from ordinary crime. It is a great deal to say of a city containing a population of some 60,000 or 80,000 people, and could hardly be alleged with respect to any other city of an equal population in the United Kingdom."

There had been in that city no case of assault on a minister of the law during the 12 months, and the solitary case of assault at that Assizes was that against a seafaring man who had been driven into the place by the weather. Then, again, in the City of Limerick—

> "He was glad to see the city was so prosperous and so free from crime. There were only two bills to go before them, both against the same person, and for the same offence."

That was Mr. Justice O'Brien again. Then, in Waterford, Mr. Justice Harrison said—

> "There is no criminal business to go before you. There is no case to be tried on the criminal side, and this city has been reported to me as having been free from serious crime since the last Assizes. This is a most gratifying circumstance, and it gives me great pleasure, as I have no doubt it does you, to find such a satisfactory state of things."

A pair of white gloves. At Kilkenny, also, a pair of white gloves; and the Judge said—

> "It gives me great pleasure to receive this emblem of the innocence of this city. I believe that expresses the general condition of this fair City of Kilkenny, and I sincerely hope that this immunity from crime and exemplary behaviour on the part of your people will continue."

At Drogheda Mr. Justice Holmes said—

> "It was a matter of great congratulation that, on this the first occasion on which he had to preside at a Summer Assizes, he should find nothing for them to do; it was most gratifying."

These are five out of the 10 cities, and I think the others would be about the same; yet every one of these cities have been proclaimed under the clauses of the Crimes Act which deal with offences which have not been committed, and which are now removed from the hands of the ordinary tribunals of the land, and placed in the hands of paid servants of the Crown. The whole policy of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary reveals an imbecility of wantonness. There is no case—no, not the shadow of a case. If the right hon. Gentleman possesses the gifts of prophecy, and if, relying upon them, he has deprived the people of Ireland of their Constitutional rights in the expectation that crimes will arise hereafter, then I cannot argue with him. But I say that upon the case I have made, the case of the sufficiency of the ordinary tribunals, the case of the complete absence of crime, I have exposed the hollowness and specious character of the vague and uncorroborated evidence advanced by the Government. However the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary may be able to satisfy the majority of this House, bound together by motives adverse to the public interest, I say that, when the time comes, he will meet with the condemnation he so richly deserves at the hands of the people of this country.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not detain the Committee very long in reply to the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton). I will not go, more than I can help, over the ground I was obliged to travel over before; but I must ask to be allowed to show the House that the case he has made will not bear examination. If the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) had not repeated it twice towards the close of his speech, and if his views on the subject did not seem to meet with approbation on the part of his Friends, I should not refer to one point to which I am about to allude. He asserts that I gave the House to understand, when the Crimes Act was passing through this House, that I by no means intended to proclaim Ireland for years to come under this Act. [MR. SEXTON: No, no!] Well, he quoted some words of mine which were interpreted by him as meaning that for years to come Ireland would not be proclaimed under the Act. Sir, the words I used did not, and could not, bear that interpretation. Would it not have been absolutely inconsistent for me to ask the House to pass the Bill, not in order that peace and order might be restored at the present moment, not that the powers of the Bill might be put in force at the present moment, but at some indefinitely distant date, and after the lapse of an unknown number of years, then the Government might find it necessary to put the Act into force? I think the hon. Gentleman will see that the interpretation he puts upon my words is contradicted, not merely by the meaning of the words, but by the circumstances under which they were uttered.

Mr. SEXTON: The words I quoted were accompanied by other words—

> "We hope that the area of Ireland over which it will ever be necessary to use it will be but a small part of the country."—(3 *Hansard*, [316] 1068.)

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member is confusing two distinct issues. In the words I delivered I have refuted, and I apprehend refuted conclusively, the absurd meaning he places on the first part of the quotation he has read to the House.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: But what about the second part?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has with others of his Colleagues attacked the statistics we have placed before the House, and has even gone the length of saying that they are imaginary statistiets put down in defiance of truth by the officials responsible for them—that they and we are accomplices in the attempt to deceive Parliament. I think it is only necessary to state that accusation in order to repudiate it. I do not apprehend it is necessary now, any more than it was before, for me to defend servants of the Crown and officials under them against this charge of deliberate falsification which the hon. Gentleman with a light heart has made. The hon. Member went on to say that I had consulted magistrates as to the administration of the Crimes Act who would be themselves responsible for exercising judicial functions under it. That is inaccurate and wholly baseless. He also stated, in direct contravention of what I stated earlier in the evening, that I did not consult the Lord Lieutenant on the Proclamations, and I repeat what I said earlier.

Mr. SEXTON: I said his advice had no effect.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman went much further—he said I did not consult the Lord Lieutenant. His counsel has always proved of value on every point. The hon. Gentleman went on to say that we had gone in direct contradiction of assurances given in the House, and that we debated in Privy Council the action to be taken in regard to this Proclamation. He seems to think that for two hours together this was debated. I repeat what I said before, owing to the necessity of rectifying a clerical error the Privy Council had to sit a longer period than it is ordinarily necessary to do; but during the whole of that period they were not asked to give their advice on the subject of the Proclamation. The hon. Gentleman has attacked the case we have made out; but it appears to me the statistics we have laid before the House are really ample to prove there exists a condition of intimidation which is ample justification for putting in force the first four clauses of the Act. To support that assertion, it is only necessary to call attention to the Returns laid on the Table showing the number of persons suffering Boycotting and the number receiving police protection. The hon. Member has, indeed, endeavoured to prove that it is a privilege to receive police protection, and rather a lucrative speculation to be Boycotted; but I repudiate this contention, and, like other accusations, it falls by its own extravagance. If Boycotting is so delightful, why is it that it is the punishment the League inflicts upon those who offend against its rules? Why is it that the fear of this punishment induces unwilling people to come before the League Courts and make abject apology for doing that which in happier countries every citizen thinks he has a right to do, without consulting anyone else? The Committee could not have failed to note the extraordinary phrase by which the hon. Gentleman indicated the monstrous, the horrible punishment to which the members of the Curtin family have been subjected after the horrible murder of the head of that family; he said they "fell under the displeasure of their neighbours!" This is the hon. Member's moderate statement of a systematic persecution that has made everybody's blood run cold who has followed the case.

Mr. SEXTON: What I said was that the greater publicity helped the family, and did not hurt them.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I refer particularly to the astonishing phrase by which he chose to indicate the Boycotting to which the members of the Curtin family have been subjected. Then the hon. Member went on to discuss the 14 counties in which not the four clauses of the Act are put in force, but only a certain limited portion of one particular clause. Now, there are two points dealt with in this clause—taking forcible possession and attacking officers of the law, and I argued in support of making this a part of the general law applicable to the whole of Ireland, irrespective of Proclamation.

Mr. SEXTON: And why not apply it to England?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Therefore, my consistency is beyond reproach. The unnecessary interruption the hon. Gentleman has just made reminds me of another point. He asks what would be thought in England if, at a meeting in Trafalgar Square, there was public excitement and assaults on the police, and these assaults were dealt with by summary jurisdiction without the protection of a jury? Well, Sir, that is actually what would happen in England. That is the law of England at this moment, and all we have done by extending this particular and limited portion of the Crimes Act to Ireland is to make the law in Ireland as nearly as possible uniform with what has for years been the law of England. This presents, I think, a sufficient answer to the last part of the hon. Gentleman's speech when he asked how it came about that, in the peaceful state of counties, where crime was unknown, we nevertheless used our power and proclaimed them under this particular sub-head. We thought it desirable and expedient to extend to Ireland what long ago ought to have been so extended, and what is the law of England. There may at any time be riotous conduct under excitement that may arise, and we have made the Proclamation under this sub-head universal throughout Ireland.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I am disposed to take exception to the right hon. Gentleman's statement as to the application of summary jurisdiction in England; but I am not a lawyer, and cannot pretend to speak with any authority upon such a point.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not wish to be misunderstood. What I asserted, and all that it was necessary for my argument to assert, was that by summary jurisdiction, and not by jury, the offence of assaults on the police was dealt with. The punishment, too, is six months' imprisonment.

Colonel NOLAN: Well, as neither of us have the necessary legal qualifications, I think it is a point we had better leave the lawyers to discuss; it is altogether another point to which I wish to call attention. I want to complain of the official who supplied the right hon. Gentleman with false information in reference to alleged Boycotting at Tuam, and there is naturally much indignation at the false account of what actually took place. The information supplied to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was to the effect that a large grazier near Tuam had incurred the popular displeasure, and the people had torn down his wall and filled up a well of his. Of course, this would be a very wrong thing to do; but the information was totally incorrect, and so gross a misrepresentation of the real facts, that I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will, after investigation, take some steps to mark his sense of the conduct of whoever supplied him with the false information. I have a telegram here from one of the most respectable mercantile men of the town, and it confirms the statement made in a letter from the local administrator, which I have seen, that it was the grazier himself who pulled down the wall to enable his cattle to get at the well; and what the people did was to complain to the Local Board, who directed that the wall should be built up again, so that the people who had always been accustomed to use the well might have the water kept pure and uncontaminated by cattle. I believe the people then set to work and did actually build up the wall, not waiting for the action of the Sanitary Board, which at Tuam, as elsewhere, is not always rapid. Now, I think, at the very outside, supposing the people were wrong in thus anticipating the action of the Sanitary Board, it is only a case for a civil action; and I do not suppose any punishment would be inflicted. But surely it ought not to be represented to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary as a case of Boycotting, giving the town an evil reputation. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has the means of knowing that the information supplied to him was false. He can see—if he has not seen—the letter of the administrator recording all the facts; and if he cannot do so now, I hope he will on a subsequent occasion take an opportunity of saying that the account supplied to him was incorrect, for his official utterances give publicity to a statement discreditable to a peaceful locality. I think the right hon. Gentleman should inquire into the facts, and, finding them altogether opposite to his statement, should give equal publicity to the denial.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. and gallant Gentleman will furnish me with particulars, I will make it my duty to inquire.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I do not think I ever heard a more lame and inadequate reply from a Minister to a severe indictment than that to which we listened a few minutes ago. What were the points, to recapitulate them briefly, put forward with unanswerable force by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton)? I cannot now summarize them all. I can only point out the most serious, to many of which the right hon. Gentleman gave the go-by, though they were driven home with great force by my hon. Friend, such as, I believe, I have never heard excelled in any speech in this House. First, he pointed out that the Proclamation was resorted to by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary with indecent haste, without the possibility of anything worthy of the name, or that could be truthfully described as consultation with the Lord Lieutenant and the Privy Council; whereas there was a clear and distinct understanding given in the House, during our discussion of the Crimes Act, in repeated pledges by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and other Ministers, that the application of the Act should be limited in area where the necessity for its application should be shown to exist. Of course, we understood these assurances to mean that the application of the Act would be limited to areas wherein it was found on inquiry there was a state of disturbance, crime, or outrage. But my hon. Friend has shown this Proclamation was put forward with hot haste after the passing of the Act. Without consideration the Act was applied, as regards the provisions in the four first clauses of the Act, and also its more stringent provisions, to 18 out of the 32 counties of Ireland, of which number there is not in more than three counties the shadow of an excuse for it, even from the point of view of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. To this the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary gave no reply at all, though the Proclamation constitutes a distinct and deliberate breach of faith to the House, for it was made an argument, and repeated again and again, to induce us to trust this power to the Executive; over and over again it was said—"Our Bill will be strictly limited in point of area, and we hope that the portions of Ireland to which it will be necessary to apply the Bill will be extremely limited." What do we find? With no outburst of disorder, but in the face of what is admitted repeatedly to be an improving state of the country, though with the admission opportunity is taken to insult the people by saying they are cowards, and are afraid of the Act, the right hon. Gentleman deliberately rushes over to Dublin, and, without due consultation, proclaims more than half the whole of Ireland under the more stringent provisions of the Act, without the shadow of a shade of justification. This has been urged with an aptitude of illustration, not beyond what the subject demands, by my hon. Friend, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary does not attempt to answer it. It is not possible to defend such a gross and flagrant breach of faith as has ever taken place in public life in this country. I do not see how the Ministry is going to get over it. Another of the points urged by my hon. Friend had reference to the reply given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who stated during the passing of the Bill through the House that he was of opinion that the minor provisions ought to be applied to the ordinary Criminal Law of the country. I observe he has now confined himself to the offence of assault on the officers of law, leaving conveniently out of view and trying to pass by that obnoxious portion of the clause that applies this power of summary jurisdiction and six months' hard labour to those poor creatures nominally and technically guilty of the offence of taking forcible possession of their houses. He did not say that this was the law of England. It is a most iniquitous provision; and when he tried to induce the House to assent to the inclusion of that which we moved to omit in Committee, he did not say anything about applying it to the whole of Ireland. The right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) sought to justify that by drawing desperate pictures of bands of armed men attacking houses, injuring and endangering the lives of the caretakers, and plainly led the House to believe that the provision was intended to apply to Kerry, and for coping with the acts of Captain Moonlight there and in other places. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary knows that in the majority of cases what is called taking forcible possession is a perfectly peaceful proceeding. When he made his defence he, however, never made any allusion to this. He will not attempt to say it is the law of England, or that his Government is prepared to make it such. Such an attempt would be met with general opposition in this country; or, at least, I hope so. So much for that point. It is impossible to conceive upon what principle this provision, the most repugnant to justice, is applied to the whole of Ireland; and if I wanted illustrations to strengthen our case I might point to Carlow, where there has been no case of taking forcible possession recorded by the police for a whole year past. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary falls back on the Police Returns of Boycotting, and these have been torn into shreds and tatters by my hon. Friend. In point of fact, there is not the slightest reason why these Returns should not show 50,000 cases; they are official, and the House must accept them as the basis of his novel method of argument. On statistics which simply enumerate cases without any clue to their identification, without the least shadow of opportunity of inquiry and arriving at the truth, he calls on the House to decide on an important question of the administration of the law, or to pass Statutes on the faith of anonymous Returns, the irresponsible testimony of unknown officials, for we have no name as authority. No one supposes that Mr. Reed goes round to inquire into the truth of the Returns. We have not the names of the officials responsible; it is a totally novel method of procedure. Let us examine these Returns by such lights as are afforded us for examination. We have always been told all along that the system of Boycotting is based on the most frightful intimidation. Will that be denied? Has it not been the common ground of right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and have they not drawn the most horrible pictures of the frightful character of the intimidation on which Boycotting is based? That cannot be denied; it will be in the memory of all. Now I will take a few illustrations from this list, and I begin with the Province of Leinster, and I take County Carlow, and here we have 16 cases of persons Boycotted, wholly or partially. Now I turn to the Reports of outrages furnished by the police for the same period—the June quarter—and I find that in the entry for Carlow both columns dealing with the offences of intimidation are blank; intimidation, by threatening letters or otherwise, there is absolutely none during the whole three months that preceded the passing of the Crimes Act. No act of intimidation committed in Carlow, and yet 16 people are Boycotted there! Explain that if you can. You tell us Boycotting is based on a detestable system of intimidation, and yet your own police officers return no case of intimidation in County Carlow, where 16 people are returned as Boycotted. These figures are repeated again and again. In Kilkenny there are 258 people returned as Boycotted, and this I believe to be a gross invention, for I believe the cases of Boycotting in Kilkenny are extremely few. To say that there are 45 persons completely Boycotted is, I think, utterly absurd. Now, turn to the intimidation Returns, and we find no case of intimidation by threatening letter or otherwise. And yet you have 258 cases of Boycotting. Now, I will leave it to the intelligence of any man, has not the House been humbugged, bamboozled, when it was told that Boycotting was based on the most desperate intimidation, and then asked to believe that, without intimidation, there are 258 cases of Boycotting in Kilkenny during three months? Either the right hon. Gentleman must admit there is no intimidation in Boycotting, or else that his statistics are so many lies. We ask you for the names of these 258 people, and with my knowledge of Ireland I will undertake, if you give me names or references to Kilkenny, to show that four-fifths of these cases are inventions. Certainly there are not 10 people Boycotted in Kilkenny. I might go on through the whole list, and I have no doubt there are a number of cases equally striking. Take Wexford, where there are more cases of Boycotting probably than in any other county, 10 times as many as in Kilkenny I should say. But your figure is 292, and there are no Returns of intimidation. Now, I ask any fair-minded man, could these figures present a stronger case than they do in our favour? Let me call attention to this fact, for it is important as bearing upon this Proclamation and the justification upon these Returns for proclaiming these counties. We were told when the Act was going through Committee, and the wording of the Proclamation bears me out, that the Proclamation should be for crime and outrage, not for Boycotting. The Proclamation follows the wording of the Statute, which is—the Lord Lieutenant may, by and with the advice of his Privy Council, from time to time, as he deems it necessary for the "prevention or detection of crime and outrage." Mind, crime and outrage, not the new offences created by the Act, but what was known before as crime or outrage. There is not even the compensation of the word "or." It says, crime "and" outrage, not crime "or" outrage, must be proved to exist before a Proclamation can be declared under the provisions of this Act. Now, Sir, I contend that that strictly limits it, and that the Government are bound, before they can issue a Proclamation under this Act, to ascertain that it is necessary for the discovery and punishment of crime and outrage. But there is no crime or outrage. What do these figures prove? Suppose that we admit that there are some Boycotted people in, say, the county of Kilkenny; supposing we say that there are 10 Boycotted people in that county. I think, by-the-bye, that that would be an outside figure, for it is a very quiet county indeed, and there have been very few strikes there with regard to rent. But what do our figures placed side by side with your figures prove? They prove that Boycotting is a system of peaceful associations—that it is a peaceable combination devoid of intimidation among a certain class of people for the protection of their own interests; and I contend that it is established beyond question that the Return you have given showing a number of cases of Boycotting fails to show that any act of intimidation has been committed in the county. You can make them agree one with the other. If it is a comparatively innocent class of Boycotting, then it cannot be described as crime and outrage. It is simply a peaceable combination among the people that they will not deal with certain individuals; and we contend that it is not illegal under the Statute; but that the wording of the Statute, as I have read it out to you, deprives you of the power of issuing a Proclamation in respect of districts in which mere Boycotting exists. It is an important fact which cannot be too often repeated; I believe, and I am convinced, that it conveys the spirit of the Statute, that the Executive in Ireland have violated the law in issuing this Proclamation. It is not enough, as the right hon. Gentleman said, to assert that the matter has been decided by the House. The mere fact of your having passed a Coercion Act does not place the Executive at liberty to do exactly as they like. It does not render them able to administer the law irrespective of criticism. It would not enable the Executive to take up anybody or everybody and have them shot on the spot. You cannot do that even if you have a Coercion Act. You must be restrained; you must be kept by the wording of the Statute that authorizes you to issue a Proclamation, where the Lord Lieutenant, by and with the advice of the Privy Council, holds that it is necessary for the prevention, detection, and punishment of crime and outrage. I have proved that in this county of Kilkenny there is neither crime nor outrage; and I ask, how could you contend that you are justified by the words of the Statute in applying this Proclamation for the discovery and punishment of crime and outrage to that county, when your Police Return proves, beyond all question, that in that county there is neither crime nor outrage? This is a very serious matter. It is our right to criticize the conduct of the Executive, especially when they commit such serious acts as that which I have just described. They are not at liberty to over-ride the Statute as they have done in this case; and yet here we have the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland getting up and deliberately omitting to reply to any one of the grave and important charges that we have made against his action in Ireland. He certainly got up and replied to some of the minor points upon matters of infinitesimal importance; but the main charge made by my hon. Friend met with no reply whatsoever. Let me inform hon. Gentlemen opposite that they are purely mistaken in their opinions of the functions of the House. The chief function of this House is to criticize the action of the Executive; and until you get us under lock and key, which cannot possibly be done until after the end of the Session, we shall continue to exercise this function—until, under your Act, you have resort to the only method of argument which appears to me at all effectual, that method of argument embodied in the words coming from the Front Ministerial Bench—"I claim to move that the Question be now put." That is the chief characteristic of the Conservative Government at the present time; but, fortunately, they are not in a position to pursue that course just now; and we intend to insist on having laid before us the grounds for this wholesale issue of the Proclamation in Ireland. I contend that the grounds which have been put forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary constitute a gross and flagrant breach of faith, and of his repeated pledges given in this House in the course of the debates on the Crimes Act; and I venture to say that the people of England, when this fact is brought home to them, will make known in no unmistakable fashion their opinion upon it.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to move, Sir, that you report Progress, and ask leave to sit again; and I do so in order that I may inquire of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) whether the Government intend to take to-night the Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill? Already another Scotch Bill has been put down for Thursday evening, and it will be very inconvenient for the Scotch Members to be kept up till 4 o'clock this morning and late again on Thursday. I would suggest that the Technical Schools Bill be not taken to-night, but that it be deferred till Thursday.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Technical Schools Bill will not be taken, and I therefore hope that the hon. Gentleman will consent to withdraw his Motion.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I hope the hon. Gentleman will do nothing of the sort. It is now 20 minutes to 2. We were here in this House till 2 o'clock this morning; we have to get up here, if we do our duty, at 12 o'clock to-day; and, as has been repeatedly pointed out on former occasions, the attendants of this House require some rest as well as the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury; and though the right hon. Gentleman does not require to be in his place till 12 o'clock in the day, yet the attendants have to be there at the early hour of 10 o'clock. I think it is perfectly monstrous that the officials and attendants of this House should be kept up night after night in the way they are kept up by your own side of the House, and that we should be asked to come down here six days a week, and sit up night after night till 4 o'clock in the morning. I hope my hon. Friend will not withdraw his Motion, and if he does I shall have great pleasure in moving a similar one myself.

MR. HUNTER: I made the Motion in order that I might ask a question of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, and having done that I wish now to withdraw it.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I am very glad indeed that the hon. Gentleman has withdrawn his Motion, in order that we may get some real reply from the Government to the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). I think I have never heard a case so completely damaged as has been the case of the Government in the speeches which have been delivered to-night. I really was not aware before to-day—because I had not had an opportunity of going into the statistics—that the case of the Government for this Coercion Act was so wretched a one. How has the charge been met by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland? I never knew an answer more inadequate than the one we have had to listen to to-night. The right hon. Gentleman says you must not impugn our action, because a Minister of the Crown is a person who under no circumstances can do any wrong. But, after all, Ministers of the Crown are only mortal beings, and so by no means infallible, as the right hon. Gentleman seems to suggest. The whole Constitution of this country is framed on distrust of the Ministers of the Crown; and now my hon. Friend has brought forward facts so conclusive as to blow the case of the Government out of the water. What is the answer to his contention? We are told that Ministers of the Crown are respectable and responsible men; that they would not be parties to anything un-Constitutional; and that is the only way in which the Government seek to defend themselves. They want to write the motto "All serene" over their doors. But let us assume that everything is all right, and that "All serene" is to be the watchword of future Governments. What are we brought here for if that is the kind of answer we are to get from the Government? I will take one point which was suggested by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast, and I think that that one point will be sufficient to demonstrate the hollowness of the case of the Government. My hon. Friend quoted the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on the 27th of June—that he not only hoped not to have to put this Act in force for large districts, but that he also hoped that in certain instances he would not have to put it into force at all. Very well. He hoped that in large districts it would not be necessary that the Act should be enforced at all. If that was so then, what has happened since to justify its being put in force? We are entitled to an answer to that question. I am surprised, because I know some hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite agreed to this Bill being carried with great regret. Now, it seems to us that it was passed under false pretences, and I am surprised that they do not insist on some kind of explanation from the Government as to their course of action. I have already referred to the words in which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said he hoped it would not be necessary to put the Act in force at all in certain districts. Yet two days after this Act was passed through the House he rushed over to Ireland, and having taken a sniff of Irish air, then, Sir, he put the Act in force. That is a monstrous thing. It is like the conduct of the right hon. Gentleman in the matter of appeals. First, he promised us a right of appeal in certain cases, and then he refuses us the privilege, after stating that he had too pedantically followed the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt). I press for an explanation of this action. I say we are entitled to be told what has happened between the 23rd of June and the day after the passing of the Bill, the 12th of July, to withdraw the rest of Ireland from the pale of the Constitution. Let me tell the Government this. If the Irish people are not to gain anything by being peaceful they might just as well be turbulent. We have the statement from the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell) that it is only by turbulence and disorder that rents have been reduced. If our people are not to enjoy the protection of the Constitution when they are peaceable they might just as well be turbulent; and they may act on the suggestion of the hon. Member for South Tyrone, who says that men may secure a reduction of rent by being turbulent. How are we then to be rewarded for being peaceful, if the country is to be proclaimed when it is in a perfect state of peace? There is a county, forsooth, which has been quoted as the worst county in Ireland; and yet the county of Monaghan, which is undoubtedly a very peaceful county, has been placed on exactly the same footing by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary as the county of Kerry, although Monaghan does not at all approach Kerry in either the intensity or the character of its crime. Hon. Gentlemen opposite must have perjured consciences if they are prepared to support the Government in a Bill of this kind. Now, with regard to the Boycotting Returns, let the Government take the smallest county in Ireland, the county of Carlow. Let us suppose that there are 100 Boycotted persons in that county—but stop, let us see how many there are. The Return shows that the number of persons protected by the police patrols is two. The number of persons partially Boycotted is 16. Now that is the smallest county in Ireland, and in that there are 16 persons Boycotted. Give us a Select Committee of this House which can sit next week, and inquire into the truth or falsehood of this Report. Do not publish a tittle of the evidence. Have a majority of your Party on that Committee, and if we do not show you that 14 out of the 16 of these cases of Boycotting are lies I shall be very much surprised indeed. There is an offer to the Government. It is a real offer. They are putting forward these figures simply for their own purposes, and if they do not accept my offer we shall know what to think of it. Remember this is the smallest county in Ireland, and I can assure the House that Irish Members would be very glad to spend some of their time during the waning of this Session in finding out the truth or falsity of the statistics. Will you give us a Select Committee to inquire into the cases of these 16 persons who are reported to be Boycotted? Let us know what has been the nature of the Boycotting. Are they cases of persons Boycotted by the landlords — are they included in the Return? Suppose a landlord refuses to employ a labourer because he happens to be a member of the National League, is a case of Boycotting of that kind included in the Return, or is it only the cases of the Boycotting of the land-grabbers that are included? Are the village shopkeepers with whom the landlords never deal included in the Returns? I venture to say that if they were, instead of 16 there would be more than 1,600 persons returned as Boycotted in the county of Carlow. I know a little about the Carlow Union, where the landlords have a majority, and I venture to say that in no Union is there more Boycotting done by the landlords as against the Catholics. Now, as to these 16 persons you have reported to be Boycotted. Give us their names; let us judge for ourselves as to whether the cases are well founded or not. We will be content to deal with this the smallest county in order to judge your Returns; and I warn the Government that they cannot be allowed to blacken the character of the Irish people in the dark; and we insist on having some proof of their statistics, and I take the county of Carlow, which is the smallest county in Ireland, and therefore will cost the Government the least trouble, in order that we may judge as to the truth or falsehood of the Returns they have laid before the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I must say that I did not expect to be charged with having sought to avoid the points made by hon. Members opposite.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The best for them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. T. M. Healy), and the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), as far as I recollect, brought forward three questions which they reiterated time after time, and which also were contained in the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). The first point had reference to statistics, and the second was as to the area proclaimed; and the third was as to the question of intimidation. Now, as regards the statistics. I have replied to that more than once to-day, and I also replied to it yesterday. These statistics are given on the authority of officials in Ireland in the same way that other statistics are given both in England and Scotland, and such authority is always supposed to be an adequate authority, and it is an authority which the House habitually accepts, and upon which it bases its decisions. It was for not giving statistics on that authority that I was reproached the other day by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone). I therefore cannot admit as open to argument the honesty and genuineness of these statistics.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Which are we to rely upon? One set of your statistics say one thing, and one set say another.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not quite gather what the hon. and learned Member alludes to.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I am referring to the point made by my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, although I had not intended to do so, I will deal at once with the argument referring to this point, and I contend that I am right in my statement as to these statistics, and that I have been unceasingly misinterpreted. The hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) used this kind of argument. He said you have always alleged that Boycotting exists by reason of intimidation, and that intimidation is the chief characteristic of Boycotting, so that where there is no intimidation there can be no Boycotting at all; and he has taken the case of certain counties in Ireland in which our statistics alleged Boycotting to exist, although neither Return states that there are any cases of intimidation existing there; and he has asked me how I account for this inconsistency. But, Sir, I contend that it is not an inconsistency. The inconsistency is in the character of the argument used—and a manifest inconsistency; and I meet this argument by saying that I have never asserted that Boycotting cannot exist without the sanction of intimidation. I believe that there are cases of Boycotting in which there is no actual intimidation. And another point is that intimidation in connection with cases of Boycotting are not of necessity returned under the head of cases of intimidation in the ordinary Returns. I think the hon. Member will, therefore, admit that there is no inconsistency in my argument. It only remains, then, for me to deal with the third point which he has brought forward. He says that I gave a pledge that the Bill should only be extended to certain parts of Ireland. Now, I never gave any pledge of that kind. The very character of the Bill shows, in my opinion, that the Executive Government were bound to take power to enable them to extend this Bill to all parts of Ireland the condition of which might seem to require it. I did express a sanguine hope that a large part of Ireland would not require it; and I repeat that I do not believe that a large part of Ireland will suffer by reason of this Bill. There is a part of the subhead of the 2nd sub-section which is extended to the whole of Ireland; but, after all, the provision contained in that sub-head is merely the ordinary law of England, and I always hoped that the same law should prevail in Ireland. The opposition of the Liberal Party to the passing of the Crimes Bill did not, for one moment, relate to this particular provision. I must ask hon. Members to bear that fact in mind. I think I have now dealt with all the important points which are raised by the hon. Member for East Mayo.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I am afraid we are not yet satisfied with the answer of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. I think there are very many points touched upon by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) with which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has carefully avoided dealing, even in his second speech; and I propose reminding him of one or two of those points. But, first, may I point out the position in which he has placed himself by the explanation he has given to the Committee? He says he has never admitted that the case of the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) is made out by the facts. There are 700 persons reported as Boycotted, and 800 persons reported as under police protection, and my hon. Friend points out that those figures represent a state of gross and violent intimidation; yet, in the face of those figures, we have the additional fact that there are only 15 cases of intimidation reported in regard to Ireland during the month of June. How are you satisfactorily to explain this difference? You cannot do it. The Chief Secretary says he has never asserted that intimidation is necessarily an accompaniment of Boycotting. But, Sir, if crime or intimidation does not accompany Boycotting, then I maintain that there can be no crime in Boycotting, and there can be no pretence whatever for the Bill, or for calling Boycotting a crime. If it is not carried on by means of intimidation or outrage, by what pretence have you the audacity to take away the liberties of Ireland on the ground that there are a certain number of cases of Boycotting, which in itself is an innocent practice, inconsistent with and unaccompanied by crime and intimidation? It is a pretty dilemma in which the right hon. Gentleman has landed himself; and, he would have done well to reflect very carefully before he gave an extraordinary explanation of that kind. I venture to say never before has this House heard such a statement as that Boycotting was a crime, although it was not sustained by the force of intimidation, outrage, or murder. Now, I have a few questions to ask which, perhaps, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) will be able to answer in the absence of the Minister for Ireland. The county of Antrim shows no case of any person being partially or wholly Boycotted—no case of police protection; Tyrone shows only four cases of minor offences in the June quarter, and Dublin County has no case of Boycotting and only three persons under police protection. Why were these three counties, showing an absolute blank in their Criminal Calendar, proclaimed under any part of the Crimes Act? As the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has returned I will put the question to him, why are the counties of Antrim, Tyrone, and Dublin, the record of which, in the Criminal Calendar, is absolutely blank as regards Boycotting; why were these proclaimed under any section of the Crimes Act? It is a question to which it is not easy to give an intelligent or satisfactory answer. I would also call the attention of the Committee to the records of the counties Donegal, King's, Queen's, Longford, and Mayo, and others, which show no single case of persons being wholly Boycotted; and yet, though Boycotting is made the chief ground on which the Proclamation is defended, these counties also are included in the Proclamation. In other counties there are no cases of Boycotting, few cases of serious crime of any kind, no case of forcible possession, no case of assault on the officers of the law; and yet nine such counties are proclaimed under the section that defines the offences of forcible possession or assaults on officers of the law as those to which it is applicable. I repeat, the right hon. Gentleman has not met these questions; he has given no answer whatever, and it will not do for him, either in this House or in the country, by getting up at that Table and trying to dismiss the case with his mere *ipse dixit*. These statistics I believe to be a mass of fraud; and if we had the opportunity of tracing individual cases, if we had the means of sifting them, we should find no difficulty in establishing their fictitious character, and even the Ministry opposite would be ashamed of the case which is based on such statistics. Attention has been called to a supposed case of Boycotting in County Kerry, and I believe that is a sample of the majority of cases if we could sift them. This was a case at Ballyduff, where a process-server had police protection for two years. The police lived in his house, bought his goods, and wherever he went the police followed in a car hired from himself, while he rode before them in a common cart. He could have ridden in the same car; but in order to get the 12*s*. a-day for car-hire, he insisted on the police riding alone in the car, knowing it was the only vehicle they could get in the district. He represented that he had been fired at two or three times; but the people of the locality believed he was lying, in order to keep the police protection, and I have little doubt the people were right. This is a sample of the cases, and gives an indication of what would be the result if we had the means of investigating them all. I referred last night to that terrible case of the midwife, with which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary tried to harrow the feelings of the House in his speech on introducing the Coercion Bill. I remember how he tried to show the terrible extent of Boycotting by this instance of a midwife refusing to attend a poor woman in her confinement. But he has since not had the courage to face that midwife in Dublin. He knows she has applied to the Court for a writ, and that he is out of the jurisdiction of the Court; but he has not the manliness to say he will accept service of the writ in England, and put to the test the truth of the libel he has uttered. Another case was made a great deal of at one time, in one of the most powerful and pathetic passages of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that of a little child deprived of its milk—a most pathetic case, if it had occurred; but it did not occur, except in the foul imaginations of the witnesses who gave evidence before the Cowper Commission, landlord witnesses treated in an exceptional manner by the Landlord Commission, and never cross-examined—treated as if they were persons absolutely to be believed without an inquiry into their antecedents. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer found this case in the Blue Book, and he fastened upon it, stuck to it with almost ghoulish delight, and it turns out to be but a figment of the imagination. If we had the opportunity of investigating them, I am sure we could dispose in like manner of the cases upon which the Government claim to exercise arbitrary power. In consequence of the manner in which our case has been evaded we cannot allow this discussion to close to-night. It may be that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has failed to rise because he recognizes that he has no case. Earlier in the discussion he came with pencil and paper, and seemed to be preparing to speak; but after the speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast I remarked that he put his pencil and his paper in his pocket. It may be that Ministers do not rise because the facts put forward by my hon. Friend are new to them, and that they want time to make up their facts in reply. With the view of giving them an opportunity, I now move, Sir, that y ou report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I must, though I do not know whether it is any use to do so, appeal to the hon. Member to withdraw his Motion.

MR. CLANCY: Not a bit of use.

MR. W. H. SMITH: The Government cannot accept the Motion now. We have given to the best of our ability answers to all inquiries and statements, and it will be useless to adjourn the discussion till to-morrow merely to repeat these statements and answers. I would appeal to hon. Gentlemen, are they forwarding the interests they have at heart by the mere prolongation of discussion and repetition of statements? There is no new matter to add. I have heard myself full answers given, and I do not see that we can go further. I trust we may now come to a decision on the Vote.

MR. SEXTON: I do not think the right hon. Gentleman could have heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, or he would not commit himself to the statement that a full reply was made or attempted. I laid before the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary the case of the 18 counties proclaimed under the first four clauses of the Act. I pointed out that crime was almost non-existent, although the Act requires—and my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo emphasized this by argument—that the justification of such a Proclamation should be the prevalence of crime and outrage. But no attempt has been made to show that such exists in any of those counties. Then we quoted the official Returns; but right hon. Gentlemen are busy talking; they do not pay attention; and that is another reason for reporting Progress now and resuming to-morrow, when, perhaps, they will be in a more business-like humour. There is no proof, we say, of crime and outrage existing, and my hon. Friend has driven home the fact from two Government Returns resting on the same authority—the Inspector General of Constabulary. The one says there are some 700 or 800 persons wholly or partly Boycotted, and that there are 1,000 persons under police protection. If this is a true representation of the condition of affairs, then you have some 1,700 persons cut off from all association with their fellows, or protected by armed men, and if your argument holds good this is maintained by constant acts of intimidation. But then we have another Return, giving the statement of the Inspector General that there were only 15 acts of intimidation reported in the quarter ending with the month of June. Has any attempt been made to reconcile these statements? Is it a reply to say you rely on statistics, when we set the fact of there being only 15 cases of intimidation by the side of the statement that there are 1,700 cases of persons Boycotted or under police protection. It is manifestly and grossly a lie. We must ask the right hon. Gentleman, before he is entitled to represent that a full and ample reply has been given, to reconcile, if he can, this monstrous contradiction. I appeal to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) to tell me can he make a good case out of such evidence? Can he show that in these counties a man cannot have a fair trial, and is there any justification for withdrawing the usual tribunals for the administration of justice? We have appealed to the Summer Assizes, and we have shown that there is no justification for your action in 16 counties. We have compared 1881 with 1887 in respect to convictions for crime; and I have laid down the broad principle, based upon the figures of the last six years, that the law was better administered—that convictions were more often obtained—when you had no Coercion Bill than when you had. What reply do you make? I am prepared to go more closely into it. [*Cries of* "Question!"] I beg the hon. and learned Attorney General to maintain the courtesies of the House, as behoves one whom we have heard called the "Bayard of Debate." I beg him to be a little more patient with me while I show that I have proved my case that there has not been an ample reply, and that the claim of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to close the discussion on that account is illusory. We have not had a reply; the Government are not disposed to enter upon that reply; and therefore I trust the debate may be resumed to-morrow, and not closed to-night.

MR. DILLON: I am strongly of opinion that it is absolutely essential to adjourn the discussion, both on the ground put forward by my hon. Friend, and on another—and equally strong—ground that there are a number of items dealing with the administration of the Executive in Ireland of the utmost importance, and some involving great abuses that require to be discussed. There is the item of £1,500 a-year for the drafting of Irish Bills we wish to strike off, and there are various other points; and we have had no answer in reference to the item of £420 for the Chief Secretary's costs. There is the item for the Veterinary Department, on which points of enormous interest arise; there is the Inspector of Fisheries, and, indeed, so many items that it is absurd to think we can close discussion on the Vote to-night.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Well, Sir, I will not contest the point further; but the responsibility of this delay must rest with hon. Members who cause it. I feel confident that the country will rightly judge these proceedings. I will not, if hon. Gentlemen insist on reporting Progress, enter into a contest which is always discreditable to the House.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think it is only fair to say, on behalf of my hon. Friend, that the right hon. Gentleman is mistaken if he thinks there is any intention of protracting debate. I feel satisfied that the mere fact of throwing over this Vote for another night will not lead to a single further day being consumed beyond the time allotted in our minds towards these discussions. My hon. Friend has made clear his demand for an answer, and, having that, not anticipating that it will be a satisfactory one, we shall be prepared to bring this discussion to a close. The Votes for the Local Government Board and for the Board of Works are matters that now shrink into comparatively less importance as compared with these matters having reference to the administration of the Crimes Act. These stand forward as the main question, and we shall not—if met in a reasonable spirit—consume an equivalent amount of time with the other Votes, which, however important in former years, do not now occupy such an important place relatively. The right hon. Gentleman has, I think, acted wisely in making this concession, and I think he will find, in the long run, that he has lost no time by it. In conclusion, I would advise the Government, if they think time so important, to give proof of their *bonâ fide* desire to wind up the Session, and drop contentious Bills.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee also report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS (OFFICERS) BILL.—[BILL 362.]

(*Mr. Jackson, Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire): Before you leave the Chair, Sir, I should like to obtain from the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, or from the Attorney General, a pledge in regard to this Bill. I have once or twice called the attention of the House to the condition of the Welsh Charities; and when

I raised the discussion in Supply the hon. Gentleman promised that inquiry should immediately be made, and, if necessary, that the Charity Commissioners should have an increase in their Staff. Now, I believe that this increase in their Staff will be given by this Bill; and I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman for a pledge that the first duty of the Commissioners will be to inquire into the state of these Welsh Charities, and to hold local inquiries in the various parishes and counties in Wales, in order to obtain some idea of the condition of them. I will refer to one or two cases, and will take one or two of the parishes at random. In one of them there are five charities, and of these the condition of three may be briefly summarized. One charity of £100 is based upon personal security, and has not been paid for many years. The second, a rent-charge of £2 10*s*. a-year, not paid for many years; and a third, a rent-charge of 15*s*. a-year, payment withheld. Now, that is the case with regard to dozens of parishes in Wales; and my desire is that the Charity Commissioners, now that they have an increase in their official Staff, should undertake the work of inquiring into them without delay. And I hope that the hon. Gentleman will be able to give me a pledge to that effect before you, Mr. Speaker, leave the Chair.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Before the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General replies I should like to say one word. I do not propose to offer any opposition to your leaving the Chair, Sir, or to getting this Bill into Committee to-night; but I shall oppose any further progress being made on it this evening, or rather this morning, because I observe that the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, in whose Department this matter principally lies, is not present. I do not think it desirable to discuss this matter in his absence, and at this hour of the morning. I have gone over the Bill several times with great care. There are several questions in it of considerable importance, and which some of us, at any rate, do not regard with particular favour. One of these questions relates to the general procedure of the Charity Commissioners, and I shall feel bound to discuss it in Committee at length. However, I will not oppose your leaving the Chair.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): With regard to the observations of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. T. E. Ellis) as to the Welsh Charities, I would first point out to him that on the face of this Bill there is no necessity for any increase of the Staff of the Charity Commission at all. There is no proposal for an increase. It may be that if further work has to be done the Staff will require to be increased; but the principal object of the Bill is to secure greater efficiency in the very direction which the hon. Member pointed out. It will enable the Assistant Commissioners to conduct the local inquiries which the hon. Member demands of the Commission. It is, practically speaking, to enable the wish of the Commission to be more efficiently carried out. As far as possible I can assure the hon. Member it is the wish and desire of the Charity Commissioners to hold local inquiries of the character suggested. Now, with reference to the hon. and learned Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall, the points he raised will be for the House to decide, and I hope that he will let the Bill go through Committee to-night.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I can only speak with the indulgence of the House. I do not wish to press any undue opposition to the Bill; but I cannot see that the statement the hon. and learned Gentleman makes is correct, seeing that the words of the 1st sub-section of the 2nd clause distinctly are that the Charity Commissioners may appoint Assistant Commissioners. That seems to me a distinct provision that an additional staff shall be appointed. But the especial point I wish earnestly to impress upon Her Majesty's Government in connection with this Bill is, that if additional or Assistant Commissioners are to be appointed, they should appoint somebody who is able to speak on behalf of the working classes, in whose interest these charities were originally founded.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not in Order in introducing new matter into his speech.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Appointment of Assistant Commissioners).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: With reference to the observations made by the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Conybeare), I think he has not fully appreciated the scope of this clause. I repeat that it is not intended at all to increase the Staff of the Charity Commission, although I admit that if it becomes necessary power is taken by the Bill to do so. If you will kindly listen to me I will show that this clause merely changes the Inspectors into Assistant Commissioners. The Inspectors at present have only limited powers; and if the hon. and learned Member will look at Sub-section 4 of the clause he will observe that the power of appointing Inspectors under the Charitable Trusts Act, 1852, ceases. The object is really to have Assistant Commissioners, instead of Inspectors, and these Assistant Commissioners will be able to do the work of Commissioners. There is no intention to increase the number at present, unless it is found desirable to do so; and I need not assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that if that is done opportunities will be afforded for discussing the matter, as a Vote will have to be taken for the purpose.

MR. CONYBEARE: I am perfectly well satisfied with the explanation of the hon. and learned Gentleman. I knew I should get a frank one, and a perfectly clear statement from him. But my other point is that when this opportunity occurs, and this re-arrangement takes place, I want the Government to state distinctly that they will undertake that some of the Assistant Commissioners shall be appointed from that class which are principally interested in these charities. This is a matter in which working men have strong feelings throughout the country. I shall be perfectly satisfied if the Government will give me some assurance that they will consider this point. I do not want them to appoint persons who are not properly qualified to perform the duties that will have to be undertaken; but I can assure him that in the class mainly interested there are numbers of men fully qualified for the office; and if the Government will give me some assurance of the kind I have suggested I will not press my objection any further to this clause. If they cannot give me that assurance, I am afraid I shall have to move to report Progress.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The suggestion of the hon. and learned Member shall be carefully considered; but, having considerable knowledge of the duties which have to be performed by the Charity Commissioners, I do not think it desirable that I should hold out any hope that the working class Representatives, in the ordinary sense of the word, shall be appointed. It would not be at all possible to lay down that principle. I quite agree that the working classes have a great interest; but that interest they may turn to advantage by looking out cases in which injustice is done, and bringing all such questions under the notice of the Charity Commissioners. The hon. Member for Merionethshire (Mr. T. E. Ellis) has pointed to several cases in which he finds the charities are not applied, and if other Gentlemen know of similar cases we shall only be too glad to be informed of them; but I do not think it desirable to suggest that the Government are at all likely to accept the principle that members of the working classes will be appointed as Assistant Commissioners.

MR. CONYBEARE: It is perfectly absurd to state that there are not plenty of men representing the working classes who are not perfectly well qualified to perform these duties. If you cannot find persons of the calibre necessary for Assistant Commissioners, why are you abolishing Inspectors? At any rate, you might have appointed working class representatives as Inspectors, even if you did not think them fit for the post of Assistant Commissioners. I repeat, from my acquaintance with and knowledge of the working men whom I represent in this House, more than does anyone sitting on the Government Benches, that there are heaps of men who are in every sense as qualified and as fit for these duties as any hon. or right hon. Gentleman on the Benches opposite. It is all very well for the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General to say that, while admitting that they are interested in this matter, they can best perform their function by rooting out these abuses. They can do nothing of the kind. You may root out any amount of abuses, but you cannot get them rectified. You cannot stop the poor being robbed under the sanction of the Charity Commissioners until the Representatives of the class robbed are placed on the Commission. I will give you one instance of the difficulty of preventing this pillage. Everybody knows of the Dauntsey Charity, and how long it took Mr. William Saunders, who sat in this House, to get that matter taken up. How long was it before the truth of his argument was forced on the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House? Had it not been for the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bordesley Division of Birmingham (Mr. Jesse Collings) taking this matter up, with the authority which attached to him as a Member of the Liberal Unionist Party, and insisting on the Government setting this matter right, there would have been another instance of spoliation of this kind in the country. I say it must be and shall be stopped, and it can only be stopped by such a measure as that which I propose. I do not want to put a majority of working class Representatives on this Commission; but I say that they ought to be represented on it, and that the people of the country will insist that the people who are principally interested in these charities shall have that representation, and shall have some shred of their heritage secured to them in the future by having their men placed in a position so that their representations shall receive proper attention. It is because there is this strong feeling existing that I press this upon the attention of the Government. I have taken it up, too, because the hon. Member for the Haggerston Division of Shoreditch (Mr. Cremer) told me the other evening he intended to take this step himself, and impress the importance of this on the Government. He did not know, I presume, that this matter was coming on at 3 o'clock this morning, and so he is not in his place; but I do insist most strongly that this matter shall not be snuffed out as the Attorney General seems to desire. This must be considered seriously by the Government; and as they are not able to give sufficient serious consideration to it at a quarter to 3 in the morning, I beg, Mr. Courtney, to move that you report Progress. I cannot see what other remedy I have. There is no Amendment on the Paper by means of which this matter can be raised in Committee. In order to compromise matters I will put it in this way—I do not want to be unduly pertinacious or hard upon the over-worked Members of the Government; therefore, I will waive my right to persist in this Motion at this unseemly hour of the morning, on the understanding that the Government will give some further slight consideration to the point I have pressed upon them, and that they will favourably consider the Amendment I will put on the Paper for Report.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The hon. and learned Gentleman is speaking entirely under a misapprehension. This is not a Bill to alter the constitution of the Charity Commission as such; it is a Bill to empower the substitution of Assistant Commissioners for Inspectors, so as to make those officials more efficient for the work of the Commission, to give them larger powers, and, at the same time, to secure a reduction of expenditure. But when the hon. and learned Member talks about the representation of the working classes on the Commission, I can understand his object is to secure for that class the endowments to which they are entitled. But he is quite mistaken in supposing that he can attain his object by insisting on gentlemen representing the working classes being placed in the position of Assistant Commissioners, and to conduct inquiries without the training and the knowledge which, in the judgment of the Government, are necessary to enable the Commissioners to do their work. Evidently, he is under a misconception as to the scope and operation of this Bill. Anything we can do to make the functions of the Commissioners thoroughly efficient in accordance with the spirit of the Report of the Committee will certainly be done by the Government. This Bill is simply intended, as I have said, to make the machinery more efficient than it now is.

MR. CONYBEARE: I know that you here bring in a Bill to re-arrange, in some way, the composition of the Charity Commission; and, therefore, I say we have a perfect right to avail ourselves of this opportunity to impress upon the Government the views we entertain as to the constitution of the

Commission. It is all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to assure us that everything shall be done in order to secure the interests of the poor people; but everything has not been done in the past, and it is because the Commissioners have been so shamefully false to their duties, so far as the working classes are concerned, that we insist on this point. All I can say with reference to the somewhat insulting tone which has been adopted with reference to the working classes is, that I can pledge myself to find 12 men in my own constituency every whit as well qualified to act as Assistant Commissioners as any hon. Gentleman sitting on the Benches opposite. I shall ask, at any rate, if we proceed with this Bill now, that the Report stage shall not be taken before Thursday, so as to enable me, if I think fit, to place Amendments on the Paper.

MR. T. E. ELLIS: I wish to make one more suggestion to the hon. and learned Attorney General on this clause. This question of the Welsh Charities will give a considerable amount of work to the Charity Commission for a long time to come. He says that two Inspectors' offices must before long become vacant, and Assistant Commissioners must be appointed. I would ask the Government to adopt some suggestion with regard to filling the vacancy, and that a Welsh-speaking Commissioner should be appointed to do the work in connection with the inquiries in Wales. I asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department to-night quite a simple question with regard to a certain Report being issued in Welsh, seeing that the Welsh-speaking peasantry took a great interest in the matter; but, with his usual supreme disregard for simple justice, the right hon. Gentleman refused. I say it was wanton conduct—[*Cries of* "Order, order!"] Well, I will withdraw the expression if it is un-Parliamentary.

THE CHAIRMAN: I beg to call the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that he is wandering widely from the point before the Committee.

MR. T. E. ELLIS: My point is this. If the abuses of charities in Welsh-speaking counties are to be found out, and if those charities are to be rightly managed, you must have Commissioners who can understand the language of the people. I have an instance here of a mountainous parish, the inhabitants of which speak Welsh only. There are charities there to the amount of £250 annually which we say are misapplied.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Under the clause Commissioners can be appointed temporarily for special purposes; and I need hardly say that if inquiry is to be held in a parish where the people speak Welsh only, a Commissioner would, no doubt, be appointed who is acquainted with the Welsh language.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clauses 3 and 4 *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Declaration as to power of official trustee of charity lands to take and hold land).

MR. CONYBEARE: There is a question arising on this clause.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: In reply to the hon. and learned Member, I may say the object of the clause is to save expense, and to enable a simple conveyance of land to be carried out.

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining Clause and Schedules *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Thursday.*

TRAMWAYS (WAR DEPARTMENT) BILL.—[BILL 246.]

(*Mr. Northcote, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. Brodrick.*)

COMMITTEE. [ADJOURNED DEBATE.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Question [3rd August], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" (for Committee on the Tramways (War Department) Bill).

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Provision for protection for local and road authorities, and of the public).

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Before you go through this clause, Sir, would the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill try to explain it? Otherwise, I will move to report Progress.

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter): I beg the hon. Member's pardon. As I explained last night, the Bill is one brought in by the Liberal Administration in consequence of an accident which occurred upon a military tramway. The Bill would have been carried by that Government but for a change of Administration. In consequence of the accident a heavy claim was made against the War Department, because it had no statutory authority to construct a tramway over a public road Therefore, the hon. Member will see it is a purely Departmental Bill.

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining Clauses *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 31*st August*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* — CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS II.— SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS, Votes 36, 37, 40 to 42.

Resolution [August 30] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Committee* — *Report* — Trinidad and Tobago * [368].

Withdrawn — Metropolitan Board of Works (Fire Brigade Expenses) * [108].

QUESTION.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he could give them any idea as to whether the Labourers' Allotments Bill would be taken to-morrow?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he had every hope that the Bill would be taken to-morrow, if hon. Gentlemen did not object to its being proceeded with at a late hour.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £25,967, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Offices of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in Dublin and London and Subordinate Departments."

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Sir, we do not admit—we cannot admit, and we will not admit—that the speech made last night by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was in any sense to be regarded in the nature of a reply to the cases which we have made against the Proclamation of various places in Ireland. We must ask the Government to reply specifically to the different points in the cases we have made, and I shall point out, as briefly as I can, the proof that the Government must offer in order to justify the Proclamation of last month. We referred at length to the Coercion Act itself. The Act itself contains language of a most specific character in restraint of the action of the Lord Lieutenant. The Act declared that—

> "The Lord Lieutenant shall not proclaim any district, unless he is satisfied that the proclamation of it is necessary for the prevention or detection of crime and outrage."

It is manifest, from the language of the Act, that before a district can be properly proclaimed, according to the intention of the Legislature, that there should be proof in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant—the agents of the Lord Lieutenant must be prepared to advance proof that the district is in a condition of crime and outrage, and that for the prevention or detection of that crime and outrage it is necessary that the district should be proclaimed. I apprehend that you have not shown, in regard to any county or district in Ireland, that it is in a condition of crime and outrage contemplated by the Act. I referred early this morning also to the pledges of the Chief Secretary himself. Those pledges are not contained in one quotation or in one sentence. They were sown broadcast over the whole debate of the whole Bill. I will not quote them again. The sense of them is undeniably this—that the Government did not intend, that they led the House to believe that they did not intend to apply this Act at once to the whole of Ireland; that they rather hoped that the Act would remain a dead letter for years; and that before they did apply it to any district they would satisfy themselves that crime and outrage existed there. That has not been done, and there has been doubly a breach of faith with them. The Chief Secretary has violated the pledge he gave in this House that the Act was not intended to apply except to the limited area in which there were crime and outrage, and the Government have also been guilty of a violation of faith in the course they have adopted. Ten cities and towns in Ireland have been proclaimed. Why have they been proclaimed? Are they districts in which crime and outrage can be said to prevail? The ground for the Proclamation is that assaults upon the ministers of the law are committed in these places. If I admit for a moment that assaults upon the ministers of the law could not be satisfactorily dealt with by the ordinary law, and that it is necessary to apply a Coercion Act, I fall back on this—that no one has shown that assaults upon ministers of the law have been committed in these cities throughout the present year. I stand here to say, in regard to these cities and towns of Ireland, that any assaults committed in them in which ministers of the law have been concerned in the present year have been assaults in which the ministers of the law have been the assailants and not the assailed. A remarkable case has occurred in Cork, where a District Inspector of Police assaulted my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner). The hon. Member was assaulted whilst peacefully addressing a public meeting. The local Bench of Magistrates committed the Inspector in this case for trial; but the Government refused to allow the case to be proceeded with. That was the only assault committed—an assault in which a minister of the law was the assailant—and I say that when offences cited in the Proclamation have not been committed by anyone in any of the cities and towns proclaimed, the Proclamation of those cities and towns is mere unjustifiable wantonness. The Government, to support their own case, were bound to show that these offences have been committed, and that the ordinary tribunals have failed to deal with them; but they have done neither the one thing nor the other. Then, in the 14 counties which have been proclaimed for two offences—that is to say, for taking forcible possession and for assaults on ministers of the law—in order to justify the Proclamation, the Government are bound to show that the offences alleged have prevailed in these counties, and that the ordinary law has failed to deal with them. That is the only ground upon which you can justify special laws and coercive measures. In these 14 counties, however, as your Returns show, there has not been a single case of either taking forcible possession or of assaulting ministers of the law. What in the world do you mean, then? Do you expect to be taken, say, for rational men; do you expect us to have patience with you, or to be silent about your conduct? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary may smile; but, I ask, what in the world is the meaning of proclaiming these 14 counties in respect of offences which have not taken place in them? I could understand it if you rested your case on Boycotting and intimidation. Those offences are said to exist there—your whole case, generally speaking, goes upon it; and yet, after having passed an Act to put down Boycotting and intimidation, you proclaim 14 counties, not in respect of the offence which was the general excuse for your coercion measure, but in respect of two entirely different offences which do not prevail in the slightest degree in these counties. Whilst you have not proclaimed these counties in respect of the offences which you say exist, you have proclaimed them in respect of offences which you are obliged to admit do not exist at all. You have proclaimed 18 counties under the first four sections of the Act. Your case rests upon Boycotting Returns of the same flimsy character. These Returns are not evidence. I decline to receive them as evidence. You give us certain lists of figures; you say a certain number of people are Boycotted, and a certain number of people are under police protection. I deny it. I say that when you arraign the whole of the people of Ireland at the Bar, and suspend their Constitutional liberties, you are obliged to offer at least as good and reasonable evidence of their guilt as you would offer against the pickpocket at the Old Bailey. You are obliged to give evidence as to the fault of a whole county, just as you would give it to a jury about a single individual. We say that there is nothing in the condition of these people Boycotted, or in the condition of these people who are protected by the police, which entitled you to maintain the strictest secrecy with regard to them. If a man is protected in his house, and in his walks, and in his rides abroad, the fact is not one which it is necessary to keep secret, for it is notorious everybody in the district is aware of the fact, and the man can lose nothing by having the fact stated in this House; but, on the contrary, he can gain a good deal by such statement being made, as it will bring him the sympathy of this House. I protest against this secrecy—against having the liberties of my countrymen juggled and whispered away in this fashion. We are entitled to test and sift the evidence in these cases; and, therefore, we have a right to ask to be supplied with the names and addresses of persons alleged to be Boycotted. If the Government will agree to lay upon the Table a Return giving the names and addresses, and showing the people who are wholly or partially Boycotted, and who are under constant or general police protection, I, on my part, will be willing to forego the continuance of this debate. I am so confident that in regard to the great mass of these cases we shall be able to show, as we have already been able to show whenever we have been able to obtain a clue as to the persons alleged to be outraged, the hollowness and falseness of the pretensions of the Government, that I should be willing not to proceed with this debate any longer, relying upon our ability to refute the evidence afforded us. We shall be satisfied if you will place a clue before us. If the Government will give this information, I will ask my hon. Friends around me not to continue the debate. You could then take your Vote, and we would subsequently find an opportunity of discussing the matter. The second point I have to submit is this—and I ask the Committee to consider the matter in a rational spirit. According to the official Returns, there are 700 people in Ireland who are Boycotted, and 1,000 people who are under police protection. Now, if there are 700 people in Ireland to whom their neighbours will not speak, from whom their neighbours will not buy, to whom their neighbours will not sell, and if there are 1,000 persons who are obliged to be protected by armed men, and accompanied by armed men when they go abroad—and I do not believe that these things occur—can anyone believe that acts of intimidation are not of daily occurrence? If it is true that 1,700 people are in this position, and are kept in it from day to day, will anybody believe that there do not occur thousands of cases of intimidation? Such a state of things could not be maintained and kept up without constant intimidation; and yet, according to the official information supplied to this House during the whole of the June quarter, only 15 cases of intimidation were committed in the whole of Ireland. Now, which Return is right? The two cannot be right. One is incompatible with the other. Is the Inspector General right when he says that during the June quarter there were only 15 cases of intimidation, or are the official Returns correct when they set forth that there are 700 people Boycotted and 1,000 people under police protection in Ireland kept in a state of daily and hourly intimidation? We are entitled to claim a more satisfactory reply from the Government than the curt answer we received from the right hon. Gentleman yesterday. We must have an answer seriously delivered, and without unnecessary carelessness and flippancy. I repeat the offer I made. If the Government are willing to abandon their policy of whisper and stealth and are willing to give us such information as to the cases of Boycotting and police protection as will enable us to sift them, we, on our part, will be prepared—and no doubt my hon. Friends will agree with me in this — not any longer to continue the debate upon this subject.

The CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I venture to think that the hon. Member has confused two very different points. He has confused the offence of not giving an answer satisfactory to himself, and the offence of not giving an answer at all. I admit that I have not, either in this or in any previous debates, been fortunate enough to lay before the House any argument which hon. Members from Ireland will allow to be conclusive; but I cannot admit that I have not attempted to give an answer to every one of the points raised by the hon. Member, even if I have not succeeded in giving a satisfactory reply to the hon. Member who has just sat down and his Friends behind him upon everyone of the points he has recapitulated this morning. I do not think that I was guilty of omitting to reply to any single point the hon. Member raised in my two speeches. I think I am correct in saying that every one of the points he has now laid before the House for a second time has already been dealt with—were, in fact, dealt with by me last night. Many of them were dealt with by me last night not for the first time. There is one exception only to that broad statement, and that is the alleged irregularity of which the Government were guilty in proclaiming districts under the Crimes Act, and where overt crimes, or which the hon. Member described as "crime and outrage" had not occurred. Sir, I did not deal with that point because it was a legal point, and I confess I think it was not a point of great importance. I think it was one in regard to which further consideration and study of the Act itself would convince the hon. Member that really he had no case. If he will look at the Act he will see that the clause enforced by the Proclamation is, amongst other clauses, the 2nd clause. Now, that 2nd clause explicitly deals with offences which the hon. Member chooses to describe as "crime and outrage;" therefore, if the Legislature had seriously intended to use the words "crime and outrage" in the sense in which the hon. Member uses them, it is clear we could not have dealt by Proclamation with Clause 2 of the Act which contemplates many other offences than those the hon. Member has referred to. If the hon. Member considers that answer insufficient and unsatisfactory, perhaps he will ask my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland to supplement what has only been a very short sketch which I have now laid before the Committee. With that exception, I am sure I have already dealt more or less satisfactorily with every point the hon. Member referred to this morning. With regard to the statement he has repeated — a statement which I contradicted last night—that I gave a pledge to the House that an indefinite time would elapse before the Crimes Act was applied to Ireland, the Committee will see that such an admission on my part would have been wholly absurd, and would have been in itself an adequate reason for the House declining to consider further the Criminal Law Amendment Bill at all. It would have been ridiculous to ask the House to accept a Bill which it was not intended to put in force for an indefinite period. Then the hon. Member went on to raise a question as to a subsection of that particular clause which is applied to the whole of Ireland, with regard to assaults on the police. I have again and again had to lay before the Committee the grounds on which I think that that may be very well extended to Ireland, and why the Government are of opinion that the provision should become a part of the permanent law of Ireland, as it is a part of the permanent law of England and Scotland.

MR. SEXTON: Why do you upset the ordinary jurisdiction where crime does not exist at all?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The fact that assaults on police have not occurred for the last year in certain counties—and the hon. Member says that they have not occurred—assuming his facts to be true, and that there has been no assault in Cork and Limerick during the last year, that can be no argument against substituting an improved method of procedure, in case these offences should occur, over the antiquated procedure which has already been abolished in England and Scotland. That is all we have done. These are the reasons I have already given, and whether they are satisfactory to the hon. Member or not, they are reasons satisfactory enough to ourselves. Now, leaving the question of the great towns, the hon. Member went on to discuss the question of police protection and taking forcible possession, and to the Proclamation we have extended to all the counties and rural districts of Ireland. He says—"You have no similar law in England." Well, Sir, we have no similar law in England and Scotland for the reason that we have no similar offences.

MR. SEXTON: Neither have you any such offences in the 14 proclaimed counties—none at all.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman fails to see the vital and fundamental distinction between the case of Ireland and that of this country. All we have done by this is not to create an offence, but to establish an improved method of procedure in dealing with the offence, and the question we have to consider is whether or not the offence is one which is likely to be committed. [" Oh, oh! " *from the Irish Members.*] I apprehend that hon. Members below the Gangway opposite can hardly deny that the offence of taking forcible possession is likely to be committed. It is an act which they hold to be justifiable on the part of the tenant; an act which they think perfectly proper, and which they themselves have repeatedly urged upon the public. I do not wish to introduce controversial matter into this discussion; but the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), speaking in one of the counties proclaimed, not under the first four sections, but under this sub-section, urged the people to commit an offence. Discussing some evictions on Lord Annesley's estate, in order to carry which a large military force would be required, and which force it would be impossible to keep alive in the district where the evictions were to take place unless they took their provisions with them, the hon. Member said to the people that when the military force which had been employed had gone away, they could go back to their homes, and be just as comfortable as ever. [*Cheers from the Irish Members.*] The hon. Gentleman recommends, and other hon. Gentlemen by their cheers also recommend, these people to go back to their homes when evicted. Under the circumstances, is it not a proper precaution for the Government to take, knowing that this offence is one recommended by those who aspire to be the leaders of the Irish people, and knowing that, unfortunately, it is an offence of too frequent an occurrence already, that the Government should put the Act in force in regard to these districts. Again, I say, that though my arguments may be not satisfactory to the hon. Gentleman, I think he will admit from my point of view that I have tried as well as I can to meet the case hon. Members have advanced. The hon. Gentleman went on again to discuss the question of the Boycotting statistics. With regard to this matter, I think he will admit that I have dealt with it several times before—that I had dealt with it before he spoke last night, and that I did so after he had spoken. He says—" Why do you not publish the names of these people in order that we may test the accuracy of your facts? " Well, to begin with, it has never been admitted by any Government, as far as I know—it certainly has not been admitted by this Government—that the official statistics are tainted at their source. We cannot admit that the facts we laid before the House, and that we are asked to lay before the House, on official authority are of such a kind that they cannot be accepted by this House until hon. Gentlemen have had an opportunity of discussing them in detail, cross-examining them, and so on.

Mr. SEXTON: They are contradicted by other official Returns.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I can only deal with the hon. Gentleman's arguments in their order. The hon. Gentleman says the statistics in regard to Boycotting are contradicted by other official Returns. Again, I dealt with that part of the argument yesterday, and I think the arguments I advanced against it were of the clearest kind. The argument I applied was this. He says Boycotting requires acts of intimidation to support it—that Boycotting must be associated with acts of intimidation, and that it cannot exist without them. He then takes the statistics in a particular county—I think the particular county chosen last night was Wexford. He takes a particular county, and says—" You allege that so many persons in this county are Boycotted, but your Police Returns show at the same time that there is little or no intimidation in that county. Therefore, it is quite clear that when your official Returns show that there is Boycotting, they are guilty of gross inaccuracy, because if there had been Boycotting there must also have been intimidation." I apprehend that I have not in any way misinterpreted or misrepresented the arguments laid before the House by the hon. Member for West Belfast, and repeated by the hon. Member for East Mayo. These hon. Gentlemen appear to be of opinion that this intimidation which appears in the Police Returns is intimidation which includes within it the appearances of Boycotting; but that is not so. It is perfectly true that under Sub-section 2 of this Act Boycotting is an offence of intimidation, but in the Police Returns Boycotting is not returned, and never has been returned as one of the offences described as intimidation. I have not the official statistics here. If the hon. Gentleman will run over the heads included in intimidation, he will see that Boycotting is not now, and never has been, returned as one of the offences described as intimidation. I do not suppose that the hon. Gentleman founded this particular case on the supposed fact that under the head of intimidation the police included Boycotting. I must entirely traverse the view of the hon. Gentleman. It may be true that in the earlier stages of this agitation Boycotting could not be carried into effect except under the threat of intimidation and outrage. That was probable, but I am sorry to say that the machinery of the League has been so protected since then, that I believe it is absolutely necessary now to use intimidation in most cases, at all events, to compel persons to carry out the verdicts of the League by which certain offenders against their rules are punished. Then the hon. Member asked us why we declined to publish the names of persons Boycotted? This, again, is a subject upon which I have had more than once to detain the Committee. Our ground is this. We did not think we ought to superadd to all the sufferings inflicted upon the people by the League by Boycotting the further sufferings of having their cases discussed with the freedom —I will use no harsher term—which hon. Members permit themselves to adopt in this House. We see no reason why, to the suffering they already endure, that an additional element of suffering should be added. We feel obliged to continue the invariable practice with regard to criminal statistics, to give the total number of cases, but not to specify the names of the victims.

MR. SEXTON: What is the reason why, whenever the right hon. Gentleman is able to find a resolution passed by a branch of the League, Boycotting some person by name, he is always glad to read it to the House?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That argument I will answer at once. The reason I read out the names in such a case is because the resolution in which the name occurs is one which has appeared in the public papers by the sanction of the League, and I presume, in that case there will be no discussion in the matter in this House. The newspaper resolution I read is a resolution of a branch of the League, published on the authority and with the sanction of the branch, and I assume that the cases dealt with in such resolutions will not be subjected to that minute critical examination which, under other circumstances, the cases would certainly be subjected to. That is the last observation I think it will be necessary for me to address to the Committee on the subject. The hon. Member has said that he will always controvert these statistics which I have laid on the Table of the House as to Boycotting, and that he will never admit that they are other than false representations. Well, I cannot prevent his adopting that supposition if he chooses to do so. I do not believe, however, that he will find that the majority in the House are of his opinion, or that the people of the country will take his view of the value of the official statistics. But I would remind him that I have not, in the debates which have occurred in regard to the National League, relied in the main upon these statistics. I have relied in the main, and for the reasons the hon. Gentleman has mentioned, upon the published and notorious resolutions that the various branches of the League have passed. I cannot flatter myself that in the few observations I have addressed to the House I have been so fortunate as to carry the hon. Gentleman with me. I think he will admit, however, that I have not abated one bit from the statement I made last night; but I have made these observations in order to defend myself from the charge of discourtesy which the hon. Gentleman in the statements he has made charged against me, but which I think circumstances show he ought never to have charged against me.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I fully admit that the Chief Secretary has this morning met us in a better spirit and with a much improved tone from that which he employed last night. I must say in our defence, that if we were met in that way oftener, our arguments would be considerably shortened. We do not claim, and we do not pretend to expect, that Ministers should always satisfy us, but we do claim, and we are here to claim, that we should be met by reasonable arguments, whether those arguments should be satisfactory to us or not. We claim that when we have made what we consider a strong case, covering a number of important points, that a Minister shall not stand up and dismiss it, without even the courtesy of a notice of the most important points that we have raised. It is true that the right hon. Gentleman has gone over all the points which have been raised, and that, of course, he has not satisfied us. He has dealt with them from his own point of view. There were some points in the course of his speech which I feel bound to endeavour to reply to, and particularly as to this case of Boycotting. This question will undoubtedly form matter of great controversy in this country during the coming autumn. I have absolute confidence that the people of England will not take quite the same view of the subject as the Chief Secretary. We shall go to the people of this country and ask them what is the value of the statistics which have been presented to us, and I have no doubt we shall receive an answer favourable to our view. The right hon. Gentleman says that we have laid it down that Boycotting cannot be carried out without acts of intimidation. Now, that is not what I said at all last night; I said nothing of the kind. What I said was this, and it will be in the recollection of everybody who is a Member of the House, and who has attended to these debates with any degree of care, that whenever the subject of Boycotting was brought forward by the Ministers of the Crown they drew most appalling pictures of the misery resulting from it, and endeavoured to lead Members of this House to believe that these cases of Boycotting were cases of desperate and outrageous intimidation. That cannot be denied. It was not I who defined Boycotting; I took the definition of the right hon. Gentleman. I said—"You have told us that Boycotting is a system based upon most desperate and outrageous terrorism."

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Member has mistaken what I said. I said that Boycotting was intimidation of a most serious kind in itself.

Mr. DILLON: What is it? If Boycotting is intimidation, I say that the right hon. Gentleman went a great deal further than that. The Government have always led us to believe, or have always sought to do so, that it is a system involving frightful intimidation and terrorism. They have dropped that position, and in framing my argument I accept their later definition. Let me take what seems to be their argument now—that Boycotting as a system is not based on any acts of intimidation or threats of violence of any kind, but is simply a question of peaceful, exclusive dealing—a combination among the people themselves to refuse to speak with individuals, or to trade with individuals. That is what occurs in every trades union strike in England. They cannot deny it. There is not a single trades union strike where the man who takes the part of the blackleg is not Boycotted by his fellow workmen, and when you say that Boycotting is intimidation, and nothing but intimidation, I say that it is just the system of intimidation that the trades unions make use of to defend themselves. Do not we know that trades unions bring this system to bear upon everybody who breaks their rules? In cases where men break the rules of a trades union, men refuse to work with them in the same workshop, and refuse to have anything to do with them, looking upon them as blacklegs. They ostracise them because they are non-union men, and according to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Boycotting that prevails in Ireland, and in consequence of which they propose to take away the liberties of Ireland, is nothing more nor less than the system of exclusive dealing which prevails in this country wherever you have trades unions. The position the right hon. Gentleman has now taken up is an entirely new feature in the case. If that be so, and if we are to accept from the Government the statement that the Boycotting which exists in these 18 counties which have been proclaimed under the four first sections of the Act is peaceful Boycotting, and is not based upon any system of violence to person or property—that is to say, is only a combination not to deal with, or speak to, certain persons, then I ask the Government on what ground they have applied Clauses 1, 3, and 4 to these districts, in addition to Clause 2? Clause 2 deals with Boycotting, and nothing but Boycotting. Let us look at it for a moment. Clause 2 covers the whole field of Boycotting, whereas Clause 1 deals with the discovery of crime. When you have no crime in a country at all, why do you take powers to enable you to discover it? Clauses 3 and 4 deal with special juries and change of venue for the trial of offences of a serious character, and not for the trial of offences of Boycotting pure and simple, without cause of intimidation, which are fully dealt with under Clause 2. I say, therefore, that the case of the right hon. Gentleman completely falls to the ground, and that he has not a leg to stand upon. I say he had no earthly right to apply the Sections 1, 3, and 4 to any of these districts of Ireland, instead of contenting himself with the application of Section 2. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the Irish Members as having given advice to the tenantry of Ireland to take forcible possession of the farms from which they are evicted. The right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to defend the Proclamation based upon the ground of taking forcible possession. But that is not the question. The question is, not what advice has been given to the people, but where there have been any offences, and where the people have taken forcible possession in these counties. Why should not the Government wait until they know whether the people are going to take forcible possession? The facts the Government should go on are not the speeches of Members of Parliament in matters of this kind, but what they find in their Police Returns, or in the actual occurrences. They could at any time have applied this provision if they considered themselves justified in so doing, and if the facts justified them; that is to say, if they saw that crime existed, or was likely to exist, in three or four of the counties of Ireland. I utterly traverse the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that crime, as he calls it, exists in three or four of the counties of Ireland. Even if it were so, I traverse the declaration that that would be a justification to the Government for adopting what the right hon. Gentleman chooses to call an improved method of procedure. What does he mean by an improved method of procedure? Why, acting without any regard being had to the merits of the case. An unfortunate wretch is, under this "improved method," to be convicted by men who are not Judges at all, and sentenced to a terrible term of imprisonment, for a most trivial offence. What right has he to put this in force against the poor Irish tenant? Let me read from *The Spectator* an account given by an English gentleman, a Unionist, of his visit to Glenbeigh, when the people of Coomassaharn fled at his approach. The gentleman I speak of went into this region, and what does he see? When he comes to within two miles of Coomassaharn, he sees people running away like Red Indians, and giving warning, and then taking to the hills. He discovered some of them lying in ditches and behind rocks in the neighbourhood of their own houses. Having succeeded in convincing them that he was not one of the emergency men who were ranging through the district, he gets them to come and sit down and chat with him. What was it that this Unionist gentleman said? Why, that—

> "This people of Coomassaharn were brutally and cruelly evicted from their homes, and are now living upon charity given into my hands by English people. They have been supported by that means for six months, and I am happy to say that I have still enough to keep them for six months more."

How do these wretched women and children live? Why, they are put into their houses at night, while the men sleep out on the open mountain side; they have guards on the road, and whenever a stranger is seen approaching, men, women, and children fly to the mountains. That is taking forcible possession which the right hon. Gentleman's Proclamation will punish, by Resident Magistrates, with six months hard labour—that is the state of crime of that district; that is the condition of things which the Government profess they desire to apply a new method of procedure to. Only last week I had a letter from Glenbeigh informing me that a number of women and children were to be summoned before the magistrates—to be tried by this improved method of procedure—for creeping back into their homes and taking that kind of forcible possession.

. The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is now criticizing provisions adopted in an Act of Parliament, and not the discretion of the Executive.

Mr. DILLON: Well, Sir, I will not pursue that line of argument any further. I feel very strongly on the point, and am carried away by my feelings; but I will not detain the Committee any longer in regard to it. I will refer to the point upon which the right hon. Gentleman told us to seek information from the Irish Attorney General. I am convinced, so far as I can read this Act, that we are right in the legal matter. I am not a lawyer, but I think it is as I say. The statute confers on the Lord Lieutenant discretion to proclaim a district only where he finds it necessary for the prevention, detection, or punishment of crime and outrage. How does the right hon. Gentleman seek to evade the meaning of these words? He said that inasmuch as Clause 2 did not deal with crime and outrage, it must have been manifest that Parliament in passing this Act did not intend to put the interpretation which we claim upon the measure. I have looked at Clause 2, and I put a very different construction upon it. Clause 2 says that—

> "Any one who shall commit any of the following offences in a proclaimed district shall come under a provision."

And then it goes on to state the offences. The meaning of it is that when a district is disturbed and crime and outrage prevail, these new offences are to be set up because the condition of the country is dangerous. The intention of the Act was that you are not to have these new offences set up in every district which are not districts in which these things prevail. The meaning of Clause 2 is that where a district is disturbed, and law and order are interfered with, and crime and outrage and terrorism prevail, it is necessary then, in order to maintain the law, to set up these new offences. That is plainly the meaning of the Act. Therefore, I say we have a very strong case for our contention that, in issuing this Proclamation on the large scale that he did, the Lord Lieutenant broke the law. Supposing, even for the sake of argment, that we make him a present of Clause 2, and admit that Clause 2 may be applied—although I do not believe that it was intended that it should be applied under these circumstances when the Act was passed—but supposing we make him a present of Clause 2, what has it got to do with Clauses 1, 3, and 4? There is not a shred of argument for the claim that the Lord Lieutenant is empowered by this Act to apply Clauses 1, 3, and 4 to any district in which he is not satisfied that it is necessary for the prevention, detection, and punishment of crime and outrage. Crime and outrage are well understood terms, and I want to know on what ground—I want to know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman will tell the House on what ground the Lord Lieutenant was justified in applying these provisions to these districts where there exists neither crime nor outrage? That is a strong case, and I should like to hear the right hon. and learned Gentleman refer to it. We are entitled to ask that an Act of Parliament having been passed, it shall not have its meaning distorted, and that this clause shall not be illegally applied.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Gibson) (Liverpool, Walton): The statement the hon. Gentleman has made is not well-founded in law, and I will satisfy him as well as I can that the argument he has advanced is not a sound one. Now, I have stated in the clearest and most unambiguous language that Section 2 of the Act of Parliament creates no new offences or crimes. I am wholly unable to understand how it is that a thing can be criminal and not criminal at the same time, and I assert that any one of these offences or crimes under Section 2 are crimes in England and Scotland as well as in Ireland. When we come to deal with Section 5 of the Act of Parliament it contemplates the Lord Lieutenant putting in force the operation of the Act for the prevention, detection, or punishment of crimes in Ireland. Now, I assert that there are in Section 2 of the Act of Parliament to be found a number of offences which are crimes, and which crimes are capable of being committed without any overt acts at all—such as the crime of conspiracy. We all know that if A B and C conspire together to murder a man, the crime of conspiracy to murder is complete, although the man actually escapes, and there is no overt act to carry out the criminal design, and therefore no outrage. The hon. Member has mentioned that the words "and outrage" are to be found in this section; but these words, in my opinion, do not qualify or cut down the word "crime." That is my opinion as to the question of law which has been raised. The hon. Member says that though that may be so with regard to Section 2, it would not apply to the other sections. The hon. Gentleman must recollect that the object of this Act of Parliament is to check crime, as well as to punish overt crime where it actually exists. It appears to me that if it is necessary to apply a provision of the Act of Parliament relating to intimidation to certain counties, that would afford a strong argument indeed for applying Sections 1, 3, and 4 to such counties. I do not say that it would be conclusive, because it might be sufficient in certain counties to apply that provision for intimidation only. But we do know that a very common form of intimidation which exists is intimidation which prevents witnesses giving evidence, or intimidation which will prevent the prosecution being entered upon, and this intimidation would render it necessary to have a superior class of jurors, and, in the same way, there might be intimidation in a certain district which would render it improbable that a just verdict would be obtained, and, therefore, it might be necessary to bring about a change of venue. I do not know whether I have satisfied the hon. Gentleman by what I have said; but I trust he will see that I have endeavoured to do so to the best of my ability.

Mr. SEXTON: I very humbly, but firmly, take issue with the right hon. and learned Gentleman on the first line of page 6 of the Act.

Mr. GIBSON: What section?

Mr. SEXTON: Section 5. The Lord Lieutenant is entitled to proclaim certain districts where he thinks it is necessary for the purpose of the prevention, detection, or punishment of "crime and outrage." Now, why do they not say that he is entitled to issue a Proclamation in respect of "crime and outrage?" That would have made the meaning clear, according to the sense the right hon. and learned Gentleman attaches to the words; no one could then have denied that the Lord Lieutenant would be entitled to proclaim a district where crime existed, or even where, if crime did not exist, outrage existed. The word "and" has a conjunctive operation, and it is clear, unless the right hon. and learned Gentleman establishes a system of English grammar of his own, that the two conditions must exist in any district, in order to justify that Proclamation. The right hon. and learned Gentleman interprets English in an unnatural sense. The right hon. and learned Gentleman contends that either crime or outrage is sufficient; but why does not the Act say "crime or outrage"—why does it join the two? His reply in regard to the Proclamation as to the 1st, 3rd, and 4th sections, is weaker still. Under the 2nd section, anyone who Boycotts or intimidates a person can be brought before two paid magistrates, and sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour. Does he say that is not sufficient? Does he say that the adoption of these powers is not sufficient? Why does he superadd Proclamations under Sections 1, 3, and 4? The right hon. and learned Gentleman says it is because in the districts contemplated in the section there may be such intimidation as would prevent witnesses from coming forward. But has that occurred? He has not given us any evidence of it. He referred generally to a couple of cases in the West of Ireland, and to a third instance in some other case, where he said the witnesses had not given proper evidence. Well, I have gone over the whole record of the Summer Assizes, and have not found a trace of evidence to show that witnesses, who knew anything, have failed to come forward, or have failed to give full and satisfactory evidence for the guidance of Judge and jury when they have come forward, and I have not found any evidence to show that juries have failed to convict when they should do so. What is the meaning of setting up a Star Chamber in 18 counties, unless you are able to say that evidence is being withheld—and you do not say that? What is the meaning of taking power to change the venue, unless you show that local juries have failed to give verdicts; or of having special juries, if the ordinary juries return true and honest verdicts? There is not a scintilla of evidence to any such effect, and not a word has been said to justify the Proclamation under Sections 1, 3, and 4 of this Act.

Mr. GIBSON: I wish to point out that the object of the Lord Lieutenant in making the Proclamation is to prevent crime and outrage. The section referred to by the hon. Member is a cumulative provision, and is not to be dealt with as if the word "prevention" was to be struck out, which is what the hon. Member's argument in substance comes to. The section is intended to indicate the object which the Lord Lieutenant is to have in view, and which he is to be satisfied there is reasonable prospect of attaining by the Proclamation—namely, the prevention of crime and outrage. I submit, therefore, with great confidence that the Proclamation is perfectly legal. If it had not been perfectly legal, I certainly should not have approved of it as a Law Officer of the Crown. With regard to the second point the hon. Member has made, he suggests—and I think it is a reproduction of the observations which fell from him last night—that the provisions relating to change of venue and special juries are of no use whatever in putting down crime. The hon. Gentleman thinks he proved a want of necessity for this; but the statistics which have been relied upon by the Government from time to time in this House appear to show that there was an enormous amount of unpunished crime of a serious nature existing up to the passing of the Crimes Act of 1882, and that the effect of the Act was to diminish the amount of crime, and in cases of a serious and grave character—in cases of aggravated crime or personal violence—to increase the percentage of convictions very largely. There is no doubt whatever about that. There is no doubt that the effect of the Crimes Act was to diminish crime, and there is no doubt that the percentage of convictions was enormously increased. It would be a strange thing to suggest that the provisions as to special juries and change of venue were designed to give the prisoner an additional chance of acquittal. We are now asked to believe that to give an opportunity for special juries, and for change of venue, increases a prisoner's chances of acquittal. That is opposed to all the experience of those connected with the administration of the law, and the very fact that the volume of crime is diminished, and the number of convictions in important cases is increased under the special jury and change of venue system, appears to show that the hon. Member's view is not well-founded. The hon. Member asks what is the object of extending the Proclamation so as to apply to Sections 1, 3, and 4, instead of relying on Section 2, which deals with cases of Boycotting and intimidation. I think I have, as well as I could, already dealt with that matter; because I have called attention to the fact that where there is agrarian intimidation prevailing special juries and change of venue are felt desirable, together or apart. In some cases special juries would be enough; in others a change of venue might be sufficient without special juries. I cannot hope to satisfy hon. Gentlemen opposite. All I can hope to do is to show them that I am not treating them with discourtesy and disrespect, but am anxious to give them the best reply I can. As to this question of statistics, which is from time to time brought forward, it is hard to be always able, on the spur of the moment, to supply figures; but as to the statement the hon. Member opposite made as to the failures of justice at recent Assizes, I would say he asked me a Question the other evening, and I gave him the best answer I could. I quoted a great number of instances in which cases had been postponed at Clare and other Assizes, owing to the failure to obtain verdicts. The hon. Gentleman said that there were hardly any other cases; but a case came to my knowledge from the Midland counties. I telegraphed last night, in consequence of the statement of the hon. Gentleman, to ascertain the state of things in the City of Cork. There were five cases there, I was informed, and in one of them there was an acquittal of a very unsatisfactory character. However, I can only say that I have attempted to give as much information upon this matter as I possibly could.

Mr. SEXTON: The case the right hon. and learned Gentleman referred to was that of a seaman who came into the City of Cork, and was not an Irishman at all.

Mr. GIBSON: I do not say who the man was, and I do not say what the reasons were for the verdict of the jury. All I say is that the information I received was that there were five cases in the City of Cork at the last Assizes, one of which was an important case of murder, and that the prisoner was acquitted in a manner which was very unsatisfactory to those who watched the case.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): The speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman is satisfactory on the score of its conciliatory tone; but it is extremely unsatisfactory in other respects. The greater part of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's speech was taken up by pure speculation. "You can imagine a certain state of things," he said, "and if even half is realized our policy is perfectly right." Of course, you can imagine anything you like; but is the Government to put in force the provisions of a Coercion Act of extraordinary stringency on the speculation of the bare possibility that certain things may occur? That is a kind of argument which I think would not commend itself to any section of the House in the case of any matter affecting the people of this country. Now, Sir, I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman's observations with regard to the City of Cork are entirely contradicted by the words of Mr. Justice O'Brien, which were read last night by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast. As the right hon. and learned Gentleman seems to have forgotten them I will read them again. Mr. Justice O'Brien said—

> "He wished the City was as prosperous as it was free from crime. There were but two cases to go before them, and they were both against the same person for a trivial offence, and for the same offence.

Mr. SEXTON: That refers to Limerick.

Mr. CLANCY: Yes; that refers to Limerick. The statement he made as to Cork was this—

> "The city is absolutely and entirely free from crime. It is not the first time that I have had to make the observation; but it has enjoyed now for a considerable time, even within our own times, and within my own experience, an entire immunity from ordinary crime."

That is a great deal to be said in the case of a population numbering somewhere about 100,000 persons. I think those words could hardly be used in a case of any city of equal size in the United Kingdom. With facts like this staring him in the face, what is the use of the right hon. and learned Gentleman getting up and endeavouring to show that the condition of these districts justifies the Proclamation which has been issued?

Mr. GIBSON: All I endeavoured to do was to give the actual number of cases tried in Cork. There were five altogether, and in one of these there was an acquittal which was of a very unsatisfactory character.

Mr. CLANCY: Notwithstanding those five cases, the Judge said—"The city is absolutely and entirely free from crime;" and I say that the same thing can hardly be said of any place of the same size in any other part of the civilized world; and yet it is to this city that the right hon. Gentleman aplies the Coercion Act. Did anyone ever hear of anything so tyrannical, preposterous, and despotic? I think we can hardly allow this matter to go off as easily as the right hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to desire in the latter part of his remarks. I must refer, for one moment, at least, to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's comments on the 5th section. It says—

> "The Lord Lieutenant, by and with the advice of the Privy Council, may, from time to time, when it appears to him to be necessary for the prevention, detection, or punishment of crime and outrage,"

do so and so. He says that the word "and" is to be read there the same as "or." I may be very stupid, but I must say I am not able to grasp the explanation the right hon. and learned Gentleman gave of that astounding statement, and I would just remark that it is very curious that when the Act of Parliament means to say "or" it says it. When you want the section for the "prevention, detection, *or* punishment of crime,"—that is, for any one of those purposes—you may say so in your Act. You do not say, in that case, for the "prevention, detection, *and* punishment of crime and outrage." Not at all; you plainly put the alternative. You may want your powers for the prevention of crime; you may want them for the detection of crime; you may want them for the punishment of crime —when you want certain powers for any one of these purposes the language of the Act is clear and explicit; but in the same line the word "and" occurs, connecting, as plainly as possible, the words "crime" and "outrage," clearly making it necessary for the two things to co-exist before the section can be put in force; and in these circumstances you ask us to believe that "and" means "or." I think it is an insult to the intelligence of anyone to say that "and," in that sentence, means "or," in the face of the fact that you use the word "or," when you want to use it, three words before. But, supposing the argument of the right hon. and learned Gentleman is correct, and that the word "and" means "or" —a statement which, I think, will be received with general incredulity to-morrow throughout the United Kingdom —but, supposing for a moment "and" means "or," I should like to know what answer the right hon. and learned Gentleman can give on this other point? I should like to know why counties, in which neither crime nor outrage is reported to exist, should be subjected to this section? Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman tell me why Dublin County is subjected to this section? I feel bound to refer to this case again and again, because Dublin County, which I represent, has been about the most peaceful county not only in Ireland, but, I believe, in the civilized world. I mentioned before, by way of a Question in this House, that there has been practically no crime in Dublin County of a serious character, or almost of any other character, for several years. In the Police Returns for June last I find that it is stated that in Dublin County there was one man under constant police protection, and three houses patrolled by police, but that there was no Boycotting, and no serious crime of any kind. I want to know why it is that in Dublin County, to which these figures apply, this Proclamation should be in force? Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman get up and answer that question? It is said that there is a man in Dublin County under constant police protection. I do not believe it; and this is one of the reasons why I said last night that which I repeat to-day—namely, that these statistics of Boycotting are simply a mass of fraud concocted by persons interested in maintaining a Coercion *régimè*, the more easily to enable their own friends to ride rough-shod over the people. It is said that there are three persons who are under police patrol. I apprehend that that statement is also a falsehood, and I challenge the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to mention the names of the persons who are alleged to be so protected. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. Gentleman laughs at that, but I think it is a serious challenge. I think it is a challenge at which he ought not to laugh. On account of this one man being under constant police protection, and these three men having police patrols—cases in the existence of which I do not believe—the Government intrusts to two Resident Magistrates the power of adjudicating in cases which, when they do occur, ought certainly to be tried by juries. The excuse for the action of the Government in the case of the County of Dublin and other such counties, is that though these crimes are not committed, and have not been committed for the last 10 years, still they may be committed. This reminds me of the man who used to beat his wife, and who on being remonstrated with on one occasion, and on being told by his wife that she was not speaking to him at all, replied—"For fear you might." That appears to be the argument of the Chief Secretary. It is "for fear there might" be crime in Dublin Country some time or other that he has the audacity to take away from that county one of the greatest of our Constitutional safeguards. But I know the chief reason why Dublin County is included. I know that in that county there are a nest of Orange landlords and land agents going about ever since the Proclamation was issued, riding on horse-back and riding in carriages telling every man they meet—"The National League is proclaimed and now we are able to be at you." It is these men who want a little more power than they have at present, and think they can get it by getting the Coercion Act put in operation. It is to the whisperings of people of this kind, whose character must by this time be known to everyone in Dublin Castle—it is owing to these people that the Government have taken this step, and not because there is any cause for it at all in the character or conduct of the people whose liberty has been robbed from them. We have heard to-day two very remarkable statements from the Chief Secretary, and I should like to call attention to them. The right hon. Gentleman is confronted now with the fact that his Boycotting Returns are contradicted by his criminal statistics. He cannot get over that fact. There are 700 people reported to be Boycotted and 1,000 persons reported to be under police protection, and yet there were only 15 cases of intimidation all over Ireland during the last quarter. But now we have the right hon. Gentleman trying to wriggle out of the difficulty by giving what, for him, is a new definition of Boycotting. I have heard again and again Members on the other side of the House drawing down the cheers of the Assembly by saying that Boycotting was not exclusive dealing, but exclusive dealing sustained, supported, and encouraged by crime and outrage. We never heard anything else before this debate, but last night the right hon. Gentleman said—"Whoever else has made the statement, I have never made it." Well, I have not had time to look through the right hon. Gentleman's speeches, but I will do so, and I shall be very much surprised if I do not find that in making that statement he has contradicted himself. But he says now that Boycotting is not necessarily sustained by outrage, and that outrage has not necessarily a connection with Boycotting. Then what is Boycotting? It is exclusive dealing simply—a perfectly lawful practice; and now he proclaims to the people of England through this House that he is using the Coercion Act because of this innocent Boycotting. Well, I promise him that this fact shall be spread far and wide amongst the people of this country, and I doubt if the result will be so pleasant as he seems to suppose. Again, he makes another admission which I think is very remarkable. He has been driven from pillar to post in defending his Coercion policy. At first, when this discussion began, he said—finding the statistics of crime not to give him any support in the matter—"We do not rely upon the statistics of crime." Then he said, "We rely upon intimidation, upon Boycotting cases, and so on." But now, it appears, he neither relies on the criminal statistics he has himself produced, nor on Boycotting cases, but upon resolutions passed by branches of the National League. I call attention to that fact. He based his chief defence to-day for the step he has taken upon the fact that certain branches of the National League have passed Boycotting resolutions. What do they amount to? He has been able to show that out of 1,800 branches of the National League 20 have passed Boycotting resolutions; and he declared that it is chiefly on the resolutions of these 20 branches, out of 1,800 branches of the League, that he founds his present action, and that he founded his Coercion Bill. Has there ever been so weak a foundation for so large a superstructure? And the foundation is not even so strong as I have stated it; for, as an hon. Member near me reminds me, out of the 20 branches, whose resolutions he relies upon, to sanction his policy, the Secretary to the National League has demolished one-half of them. Now, I could not but admire the simplicity with which the Chief Secretary replied to my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton), who asked for the names of the persons alleged to be Boycotted. The excuse was, that if he gave the names the notoriety thereby imparted would aggravate the condition of those persons. My hon. Friend aptly interrupted him and said—"Did you not read resolutions passed by branches of the National League in which persons were denounced by name?" And his answer was—"I read the names because they were published in local newspapers." But it is local notoriety that these people are complaining of, and the right hon. Gentleman adds to local notoriety, general notoriety. The right hon. Gentleman does the very thing in reading out these cases which he says he will not do when we ask him for information. He has said something about the country getting at the truth of this matter, and forming its own opinion of these debates. We have this sort of talk time after time, and we know now how to estimate such a threat. Northwich has been fought and won since this Coercion Bill was introduced, and since a part of it has been put into operation, the Government have sustained other defeats, and probably more are impending. Having something to do with the matter myself, I beg to inform the right hon. Gentleman that I will make it my business to placard all over England, some of the admissions he has made to-day, together with some of the figures which were adduced by my hon. Friend the Member for North Belfast and my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo, which the right hon. Gentleman has not ventured or dared to correct, and which, while they remain undisputed, knock the bottom out of his whole case. The right hon. Gentleman has declared that he has not had time to look into the statistics—he says he gets so little sleep. Well, we get as little as does the right hon. Gentleman, and we have not half the assistance that he has. The right hon. Gentleman has a corps of assistants, all of whom are paid out of the public funds, and notwithstanding all this assistance, he is unable, after a whole Night's notice, to produce a single figure in contradiction of any of the figures which have been produced from these Benches. I promise the right hon. Gentleman and his right hon. and learned Colleague the Attorney General for Ireland, that these figures shall be placarded all over England. I promise him that some of the admissions he has made to-night, notably the admission that he has placed reliance for his action in proclaiming the League chiefly upon resolutions passed by 20 branches of the League out of 1,800; and, secondly, the admission that he is punishing Ireland for what is not crime at all—namely, for Boycotting, unaccompanied by intimidation—I promise him that these things shall be made known to the people of this country, who will then be shown, for the first time, the utter hollowness of the pretences on which it is attempted, in the name of the Union, to maintain in Ireland one of the most odious tyrannies ever known in any region of the earth.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I should like to intervene for a very few moments before the vote is taken in this important discussion, because there is much that really does not concern simply the terror-stricken districts of Ireland—I mean those districts which are terror-stricken by the tyranny of Her Majesty's Government; but which inevitably involves the interests of this country, and of those whom we have the honour to represent in this House—that is to say, the taxpayers of the United Kingdom. It is not necessary for me to labour the points, but I will merely remind the Committee that this is a Vote involving the taxation of our own constituents. Now, I do not wish to dwell upon the legal technicalities which cost so much discussion last night, and which are costing so much this morning. It is, to me, altogether immaterial, except as exposing the incompetent blundering of Her Majesty's Ministers in the administration of this new-fangled Coercion Act. I certainly have not troubled myself over much in my time with the dusty purlieus of the law, or the fine distinctions which lawyers delight to bother themselves about, and I do not desire to go into the question of the grammatical fitness of transposing "and" and "or" as it may suit Her Majesty's Ministers—because I believe the common sense of this country will understand "and" to mean "and" and not "or." If there is a transposition of words of that kind, though the words may be insignificant words in themselves, the transposition might lead up to a further tyrannical dealing with our Irish fellow-citizens, and I think that the opinion of this country will not be difficult to arrive at, and that it will not be long before it is made still further manifest, even to the dullest comprehensions on the Tory Benches. I have sat through as many hours of the prolonged debates of the Coercion Act as any hon. Gentleman in this House, and I have no hesitation in stating that my recollection is practically that which has been expressed by hon. Members on this side of the House with respect of the intention which was in the mind of the House generally when it was asked to pass the different clauses of the Bill. I refer particularly to what was the condition under which the Proclamation was to take place. I am certain that the opinion of the House on the other side, as well as on this side of the House—although, of course, the opinions of hon. Gentlemen opposite are formed to suit the designs of Her Majesty's Government, so that they do not count for much—but the opinion of the House generally, and the opinion of the country I am certain was that the House was asked to pass the Act, in the first instance, because of the alleged terrible condition of Ireland. It was understood that the Proclamation of particular districts was, in the first place, to depend upon those districts being inflamed districts—being districts where crime and outrage were not merely imaginary, such as Her Majesty's Ministers are now resting their case upon, but overt crime was actually spoken of. We had special districts held up to us as models of tyranny and of the generally disturbed condition of particular parts of Ireland. The Counties of Kerry and Clare were pointed out as districts where we were sure that it was absolutely necessary that the Proclamation should take force and effect, and in which this new and improved method of procedure should be put into operation. We were never once given to understand that the entire country was to be proclaimed wholesale, as has been done. I am perfectly certain that even the most Orange of the Tory Party opposite would have been impelled to utter a faint word of remonstrance if they had been given for a moment to understand that the most peaceable parts of their own districts and neighbourhoods were to be proclaimed under this savage and tyrannical measure. Well, then, we have a right to protest in the strongest language against this breach of faith, not by any means unusual with Her Majesty's Ministers. Their breach of their sacred pledges—because pledges made on the floor of this House may be termed sacred—I protest against it as earnestly as my hon. Friends. It turns out that, practically, no crime or outrage exists in Ireland. That is, of course, speaking generally, that no criminal offences are committed there. I have studied with some care the long lists and tabulated statistics which have been presented to the House from time to time about crime and outrage in Ireland; and what strikes an Englishman more in looking over these tabulated statistics is this—the extraordinary method by which every form, every conceivable form of offence, is netted by Her Majesty's Government and labelled "agrarian crime." Why, Sir, there are 50 crimes so-called—or at least a dozen, not to put it higher—which are labelled and placed on the Table of this House as agrarian crime and outrage—crimes which happen constantly in this country, but which no one ever dreams of specifying as "agrarian." There are offences and crimes set down in this tabulated statement presented to the House which have, I will venture to say, no more to do with agrarian offences, and no more to do with the land war which is raging in Ireland——

The CHAIRMAN: I see no connection between the hon. Member's remarks and the Vote before the Committee.

Mr. CONYBEARE: We have had, Sir, this tabulated statement placed before us, and on the strength of it we have been asked to sanction the proceedings of Her Majesty's Government. We have been asked to sanction the Proclamation of the whole of Ireland on the ground that these statistics show that a prodigious amount of crime and outrage exists in Ireland. But I will not pursue that any further. I was showing that the people who commit these offences are no more agrarian offenders than the pickpockets in London can be called agrarian offenders. But passing from that, what is the lesson of the statistics. I will accept the assurance of Her Majesty's Government that these statistics are prepared with all the *bona fides* that they and their myrmidons in Ireland are capable of. What did that prove? Why, it proved that crime and outrage in Ireland is infinitesimal. Besides, the charges of the Judges to the juries prove that. They were fast enough in quoting the charges of the Judges in the early part of the Session; but we never hear the charges quoted now, because we know very well that they disprove every statement which the Government have made. They cannot find in these charges any proof of the existence of crime and outrage—they cannot even find in them any justification for anything contained in the Crimes Act. But having this toy—this weapon of tyranny and intimidation in their possession—they are determined to use it. Why? Because, forsooth, if they do not they would be laughed at and ridiculed as, if we are to believe the information we receive, the electors of Huntingdonshire have laughed at them for having passed this Act. They have changed their tactics. Finding that there is no crime and outrage to punish with this new weapon of theirs, they say—"Oh; but there is Boycotting." What is Boycotting? I have no hesitation in saying that from beginning to end of this debate we have been given to understand by the most eminent authorities on those Benches that Boycotting meant the most abominable crime and outrage. It turns out that though there may be Boycotting, there is practically no outrage and intimidation or tyranny connected with it. It is all very well to talk of 500 cases of Boycotting; but they have to prove that there is something more than exclusive dealing, than refusal to shake hands with a man, and refusal to have anything to do with him connected with this Boycotting. They are unable to prove anything of the kind. There was a celebrated case mentioned last night—the case of the poor child who died, which the right hon.

Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer made so much of in the early debates. You find that placarded all over the country at the present moment—you find an account of the stricken father burying his own child. You know that there is no truth in the story—the story has been exploded over and over again. The Government cannot prove that there is either crime or outrage in Ireland, so they come down to us now with a new tale, saying—"We never said that crime and outrage were necessarily connected with Boycotting at all." I have heard so many utterances on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that I cannot carry them all in my mind, so that I cannot pledge myself as to what he has said on previous occasions with regard to the Boycotting culminating in intimidation. But certainly the whole gist of his argument has been hitherto that Boycotting is intimately connected with intimidation and outrage. Now, when that ground of argument has been cut from under their feet, the Government come forward and tell us—"We do not propose anything of the kind. We mean simply exclusive dealing, isolation, and what is popularly called sending people to Coventry." If that is the only ground that they have to allege, I say that they are on the horns of a dilemma. They must show that it is only in Ireland, and that it is not in this country that there is an urgent claim for this Proclamation, and that a similar Proclamation is not necessary to protect people in England from wealthy persons and squires. Why, if this were a fitting occasion, I could mention some hundreds of cases where people in this country are not only isolated and treated in a cold manner, which is complained of in the case of Irish Boycotting; but where people are starved and deprived of their means of livelihood. If there is justification for this allegation for Boycotting in Ireland, there are stronger claims for even more stringent measures being put in force in this country against the Primrose League. They taunt us with having urged the poor poverty stricken people of Ireland, who have been evicted from their holdings, to take forcible possession, and they tell us that no such taunts can be urged against anybody in this country. Well, it is no doubt a great grievance it does not exist in this country. If it did exist in this country, there would probably be much less tyranny than there is.

The CHAIRMAN: I have already told the hon. Member that he is not addressing himself to the question before the Committee.

Mr. CONYBEARE: The question of forcible possession has been referred to; but I will not go into it at length.

The CHAIRMAN: Of course, it has been referred to; but the hon. Member is entering into a long discussion as to what ought to be done in England.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I will not dwell upon that point any further in obedience to your ruling, Sir, nor will I trouble the Committee with a single word as to the question of law, or the discretion of Her Majesty's Ministers on that point in Ireland. All I would say is, that whatever the law may be, there is such a thing as equity and as humanity, and that we should insist upon the one as well as upon the other. Sir, we have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that the people are becoming more alive to the tyrannical proceedings of Her Majesty's Government, and that the Government will receive, as it merits, the increasing condemnation of the English people.

Mr. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): It seems to me that there are so many specific points connected with this Vote, that it would be a pity to wander over so wide a field as my hon. Friend has done who has just spoken. I shall, therefore, only endorse what has been said by my hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy), with regard to the inaccuracy of the Returns laid upon the Table of the House by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, especially with reference to those persons who are receiving police protection. Here is a case specifically charged against the Office of which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland is the head—that the Returns laid upon the Table of the House are inaccurate. The hon. Member for North Dublin deliberately states that in the part of the county which he himself represents there are persons who are put down as being under police protection, and he says that he does not believe in the accuracy of any one of the alleged cases. I have no knowledge to enable me to say whether they are true or not. We have, on the one hand, the Returns showing that a certain number of persons are under the protection of the police, and we have the Irish Members unanimously asking that the names of the persons receiving that police protection should be given. If Her Majesty's Government will accede to that request of Irish Members, we shall then know the truth of the matter. If these cases occurred in England, and if the right hon. Gentleman were an English instead of an Irish Minister, he would have no hesitation, I believe, in complying with the request of a body of English Members to furnish names; and I cannot comment too strongly on the fact that Irish Members are not treated as being on the same footing as English Members. The great mass of the Members from Ireland have made a reasonable request, with which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland refuses to comply. We have had the case of the City and County of Cork cited, and it has been clearly proved that Cork was exceedingly free from crime, and yet no reply has come from the Government. The only reply given is that it is placed under the provisions of the Crimes Act. For my part, I regret that the Government have not spared those parts of Ireland which are so completely free from crime as that to which my hon. Friend has alluded. I think that the right hon. Gentleman should have borne generous testimony to the fact that there are in Ireland many districts which are free from crime, and that those parts of the country should have been spared the ignominy of Proclamation. If there had been crime of any serious nature there, I should have said that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in exercising his discretion, had done what the majority of the House would have expected from him in proclaiming those districts; but the right hon. Gentleman, I think, should have waited until there was serious crime, and not taken this step in advance. The whole thing could have been done after crime had been shown to exist. There was no reason for the step he has taken in the case of Dublin or Cork; no outrage has taken place there, and yet the Irish people are to be insulted by this undue and hasty application of the Crimes Act. I think English Members should protest against the action of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland—first, with regard to the wholesale way in which he has made use of a portion of the Act where no need for that course existed; and, in the second place, with regard to the manner in which he has laid the Returns of Boycotting on the Table of the House, and the way in which he had refused to allow the House to judge of the accuracy of those Returns. I am yet in hope, however, that he will bear some testimony to the peaceable state of Ireland. I am not speaking in a carping way; but if he would bear that testimony, if he would publicly state that he recognizes that Ireland is free from serious outrage, or more free than it has been for years past, if he would do something generous to show the Irish people that there is some reason for putting into operation the law for the preservation of law and order, he might go some way to reconcile them to an Act which they bitterly resent. It is perhaps too much to expect from the right hon. Gentleman; but I believe, at any rate, that such a course would tend to lessen the bitterness of the Crimes Act. If the right hon. Gentleman will allow me to say so, he might show a more conciliatory manner to Irish Members, both in respect of his answers and the tone which he adopts towards them; and I think that would create a better feeling in Ireland and on this side of the House.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.): The first matter to which I desire to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland is that of an agent and Justice of the district which I represent, who it is alleged altered a receipt for the payment of rent by a tenant who wanted to take the benefit of the Arrears Act. On the occasion of the trial which took place subsequently, the Judge stated that it was clear that the receipt had been altered.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I rise to Order. The hon. Gentleman is not discussing anything connected with the Executive in Ireland; and what he is saying is, therefore, irrelevant to this Vote.

MR. GILHOOLY: I was going to make it relevant by showing that it is the duty of the right hon. Gentleman to investigate the matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: The discussion of this question is quite inapplicable to the Vote before the Committee.

Dr. FOX (King's County, Tullamore): I asked the attention some time ago of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to the case of a man who was committed for seven days, and who was kept in prison, notwithstanding the fact that an excellent gentleman and a Protestant in the district offered to become bail for him. A certificate was presented to show that the life of the person he was charged with assaulting was not in danger; but the magistrate, after keeping those interested in the case waiting for two hours, and after consultation with his clerk, refused to accept bail for the accused.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see how this is connected with the action of the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Dr. FOX: I bring it forward to show that the Chief Secretary and his assistants did not perform their duty; they failed in getting a truthful account of the proceedings, and the reply sent to the right hon. Gentleman was a tissue of falsehoods.

The CHAIRMAN: It is impossible to go into that matter on this Vote.

Mr. HOOPER (Cork, S.E.): I trust there is no doubt as to the relevancy of the matter which I am about to bring before the Committee. About a month since I brought under the notice of this House in the form of a Question the resolution of the magistrates in the City of Cork calling upon the Irish Government to grant an inquiry into the manner in which certain disturbances were suppressed in the City of Cork on the 21st of June. To that Question I received no satisfactory reply, and on a second appeal the refusal previously given was repeated. The matter arose out of the Jubilee celebrations on the 21st of June. A certain newspaper of the City of Cork made itself conspicuous by its celebration on that occasion. It was, of course, within its right in doing so. Certain disturbances arose, and the Local Authorities were, of course, within their right in suppressing those disturbances. But it is against the manner in which those disturbances were suppressed that my complaint lies. The reports in the local newspapers, and the evidence of all the witnesses, go to show that those disturbances were suppressed in a disorderly and riotous manner by the authorities who put the law in force in the city. There were no proper provisions made to keep the impulses of the police force within proper bounds, and the consequence was, that men were maltreated and innocent persons, women and children were injured; whereas, if there had been a strict supervision and control of the men whose duty it is to protect the lives of the citizens of Cork, these deplorable events would have been avoided in a city which is more free from crime than any in Ireland. Of course, if the appeal had come from an ordinary body of guardians, or even from the Corporation of the City of Cork, I should not have wondered if the right hon. Gentleman had treated it with that supercilious disregard we have so often witnessed in this House. If it had come from a branch of the National League, I should not have wondered at the right hon. Gentleman taking no notice of the appeal, although on the branch of the League in the City of Cork are some of the most respectable citizens and merchants, including the Mayor; but this appeal came from a body of 20 magistrates in the City of Cork, representing every shade of political and religious opinion. It did not come from any rump or section of the magistracy; it emanated from a large meeting called at the request of the Mayor, and if there is anything which to my mind shows how utterly this Government is out of touch with the feeling of the Irish people, it is the signal disregard with which the magistrates were treated by the right hon. Gentleman, who, I regret to say, has left the House without deigning to listen to the statement I have to make. At a meeting of the City Magistrates, specially convened by the Mayor on the 27th of June, it was proposed by Mr. James Lane, J.P., seconded by Lieutenant Colonel Donegal, J.P., and resolved unanimously—

> "That we, the Mayor of Cork, and the several magistrates of the City, assembled at the instance of the Mayor to consider the arrangements of the Royal Irish Constabulary on the occasion of the riots which took place in this City on the 21st of June instant, are of opinion that a commission should be immediately issued to take inquiry upon oath as to the cause and result of such riots, and who are, or were responsible, therefor."

The right hon. Gentleman having returned after his temporary absence, I trust he will listen to the statement I have to make. I wish to know whether the Chief Secretary really personally considered this matter, or whether he did not place himself entirely in the hands of Captain Plunkett, who has behaved in Ireland as despotically as any Turkish Pasha. A more reasonable request could not have been addressed to any Government than this application for inquiry; but, even had the request been made in unreasonable language, I should say that the fact of the resolution being backed by 20 magistrates of all shades of political and religious opinion should have been quite sufficient to give it passport to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government. The resolution and the letter of the Mayor were forwarded to Dublin Castle, and on the 29th of June a letter was received from General Buller, stating that he was directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acknowledge the receipt of the Mayor's letter of the 28th instant, and the accompanying copy of a resolution, adopted at a meeting of the magistrates held at Cork. No further notice of the communication having been received, on the 6th of July the Secretary, Mr. Giltinan, wrote the following letter, addressed to the Under Secretary at Dublin Castle:—

> "Sir,—Referring to your letter of the 29th ultimo, acknowledging receipt of the Mayor's letter of the 28th, and of its accompanying copy of a resolution adopted at a meeting of magistrates held in Cork, in reference to the disturbances which took place in the City on the 21st ultimo, I am directed by the Mayor to ask you whether he is to regard your communication as final, or if he may expect to receive an explicit answer to the request for a sworn inquiry contained in the magistrates' resolution."

That letter was written a week after the reply was received from General Buller, and another week elapsed before the following answer was received. General Buller wrote from Dublin Castle on the 12th of July that he was directed by the Lords Justices to acknowledge the receipt of the Secretary's further letter of the 6th instant on the subject of the resolution recently adopted by the Magistrates of the City of Cork, praying that an inquiry should be held into disturbances which occurred in the City of Cork on the 21st ultimo, and, in reply, acquainted him, for the information of the Mayor of Cork, that the Government had no information which led them to think that adequate reason existed for holding such inquiry. That very unsatisfactory answer appears to me to show that Her Majesty's Government had no desire to get information, because they never asked the Mayor on what grounds the resolution was passed, and they did not say that they had made inquiry in any quarter as to whether there were sufficient grounds for passing the resolution; they simply say they have no information which leads them to think that adequate reasons exist for holding such inquiry. In consequence of that, on the 20th of July a further meeting of the city magistrates was specially convened by the Mayor. The Mayor was in the chair, and on hearing read the resolution unanimously passed by 20 magistrates of the city on the 27th ultimo, and the replies of Sir Redvers Buller, Under Secretary, of the 29th ultimo and the 12th instant, on the subject of the inquiry asked for in the resolution referred to, it was resolved—

> "That, seeing it is an ascertained fact that a riot of a serious character took place in this city on the 21st ultimo, and that property to a large extent was on that occasion damaged and destroyed, that it is alleged by the Mayor that unnecessary violence was used by members of the Royal Irish Constabulary, and that several persons were severely injured; that it is also alleged by the Mayor that the arrangements made by the authorities were not adequate, and that all these matters were reported by the public journals—from these facts and statements the magistrates are still of opinion that the inquiry asked for by the resolution of the 27th ultimo ought to be granted."

This was signed by the Mayor, Mr. J. O'Brien. The foregoing resolution was transmitted on the 21st July, with the following note from the chief clerk of the Justices of Cork:—

> "Sir,—I have the honour to transmit herewith a resolution passed by the city magistrates at a meeting held on yesterday, 20th instant, again asking the Government to grant the inquiry referred to in the former resolution adopted by them on the 27th ultimo."

To this communication the following reply was received on the 29th of July from Sir Redvers Buller:—

> "I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, transmitting a copy of a resolution passed at a meeting of magistrates of the City of Cork held on the 20th instant, respecting their application for a sworn inquiry into the disturbances which recently took place in the city. I am directed to refer the magistrates to the reply sent on the 12th instant, and to add that no evidence in support of the allegations contained in their resolutions has been received by the Government."

Now, I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he made any attempt to get this information, or did he intend that the magistrates should forward him particulars. Did he take any steps to ascertain whether this was a reasonable or unreasonable request? I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he did not place himself entirely in the hands of Captain Plunkett, the Resident Magistrate in the district? Now, a good deal depends upon the conduct of Captain Plunkett with reference to this particular meeting. He was invited by the Mayor of Cork to attend, and whatever his politics may be it should be remembered that upon him depends the peace of the city. How did Captain Plunkett treat this respectful request from the Mayor of Cork?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is now travelling beyond what is appropriate to this Vote. The question appropriate to the Vote on which we are now engaged is as to whether the Chief Secretary for Ireland should have ordered an inquiry; but to go into the occurrences themselves is foreign to the Question before the Committee.

Mr. HOOPER: I intended simply to show the manner in which the Chief Secretary had treated this request, and I have made a challenge to him to say whether he placed himself in the hands of Captain Plunkett.

The CHAIRMAN: Up to that point the Member was speaking quite relevantly; but when he proceeded to deal with the conduct of Captain Plunkett he went beyond this Vote.

Mr. HOOPER: I now ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to give an explicit statement to the Committee of his reasons for refusing to place confidence in 20 duly elected magistrates of the Irish Bench. If these men were fit for their commissions as magistrates they were surely worthy of the confidence of Her Majesty's Government. If they were not worthy of the confidence of Her Majesty's Government in respect of this matter, why in the name of common sense are they retained on the Magisterial Bench? It is an insult to every one of these men that Her Majesty's Government did not pay attention to the request of such a body. What regard can the people of Cork or the people of the district pay to laws which are enforced by these men when Her Majesty's Government refuse to receive the representations of 20 magistrates of the locality of all shades of political and religious opinion? The statement, I say, deserved the most serious consideration of the Government. Even if the right hon. Gentleman had not time to examine this Notice which has been served upon him by 20 magistrates of the City of Cork, let him examine into the facts now. What we want is an assurance that there will be an inquiry in order that the people of Cork shall have some guarantee that they will not be left to the uncontrolled and brutal discretion or indiscretion of Captain Plunkett during the coming winter.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no objection to the action of the hon. Member in bringing forward this case in which he naturally takes an interest, and I will state very briefly to the Committee the course taken by the Government in this matter. But first allow me to correct the statement of the hon. Gentleman which may have misled the Committee, unintentionally of course, into the belief that the resolution referred to was that of all the magistrates.

Mr. HOOPER: I said it was the action of a body of the magistrates, 20 in number, who obeyed the summons of the Mayor.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I admit that the number is considerable. There were 20 out of a total number of 48, and they were all the magistrates who were not absent in this country on the occasion of the Jubilee. However, I do not want to press that point, because the action of the Government was governed by considerations of an entirely different character. The hon. Gentleman asks how we came to disregard this request. But does not the hon. Gentleman see that something more than the information furnished is necessary to institute an inquiry into a case of riot of this kind? The Executive clearly ought not under any circumstances to grant a formal, an elaborate, and a sworn inquiry, unless there is something in the nature of a strong *primâ facie* case in connection with some person or persons connected with the riot, and unless there is some reason to believe that the inquiry would elicit facts which, in the opinion of the Government, would justify the taking of special measures in the future. That was the justification for the Belfast inquiry; but there is no such justification in the case which occurred at Cork. The hon. Member has not alleged any ground for supposing that any future advantage would be gained. His only ground has been that the inquiry was asked for by 20 magistrates of Cork.

MR. HOOPER: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to say that I was not permitted to go into the facts at all?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: There being no facts, in the opinion of the Government, to support a *primâ facie* case, nor any prospect of any person being connected with the riot in the way I have indicated, I see no reason to go back on the decision at which the Irish Government arrived and stated to the magistrates at Cork.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I altogether fail to gather from the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to this statement of my hon. Friend that the Government made any inquiry whatsoever into the facts of the case. We wish the right hon. Gentleman to state to us his reasons for not making inquiry into the case. The only reason against this appears to be that the hon. Member has not made out a *primâ facie* case; but, as my hon. Friend pointed out, when he began to go outside the preliminary statement of the case, he was not allowed to proceed by the Chairman. Therefore, I think the right hon. Gentleman has offered no adequate excuse for not granting the inquiry demanded by my hon. Friend. I regret that we are precluded from going into the whole question; but we say that we are entitled to have from the right hon. Gentleman an explicit statement as to the course which the Government took to ascertain the facts of the case—a statement showing to whom they applied, and the nature of the accounts they received. We say that, so far from the facts contradicting the statement of the magistrates, the Government made no effort to get any information. We know that they refused to consult anyone but the Resident Magistrate or Police Authority; and the right hon. Gentleman excuses himself by saying that my hon. Friend has not made out a *primâ facie* case, when the truth is that he was not allowed to go into the facts. If the right hon. Gentleman is not to rely on the representation of 20 magistrates, on whom or what is he to rely? Many of those magistrates were Conservatives; and as to their not being the majority, I do not believe that where there are 48 men on the Commission of the Peace, it is possible to get the whole of them together to pass a resolution of this kind. Are we to assume that if 47 of the magistrates came together, you would not take any action because the whole number was not present? I have a great interest in the City of Cork, political and otherwise; and I find that almost every magistrate who was in Cork at the time, and who could by any possibility take part in the deliberations, was present. The resolution was adopted unanimously by the large number of magistrates of all shades of opinion who attended the meeting. If the resolution had been passed over the heads of the Tory minority, I could have understood the refusal of the right hon. Gentleman to accede to the demands of the magistrates; but the very signing of the resolution by the Mayor and his brother magistrates shows conclusively that their only object was to have this matter sifted to the bottom, and to put the responsibility for the riot on the proper shoulders. The Mayor said—

> "I am ready to accept any responsibility for the people of Cork which may be fairly called for by the Government for these disturbances; and we assert that these riots were deliberately brought about by the action of the police, and that it is unfair to screen them. The Government cannot, with any show of justice or fair play, refuse to grant an investigation into these disturbances which took place in the city, and which, I have no hesitation in asserting, were brought about by the action of Captain Plunkett and the policemen under his charge."

It must be clear that the only object of these gentlemen was to clear up, as far as they could, certain rumours and reports spread about the city in connection with the Police Authorities; and all I can say with reference to that portion of the statement of my hon. Friend is that the course which the Government has now adopted is to take the administration of the law out of the hands of those men who are supposed to administer it in the ordinary course; they have set up another practice which can only have the effect of driving out of the minds of the people any small respect which may be lingering there for the law. If there is anyone on the Irish Bench more likely than another to entertain a biassed view of the conduct of the people of Ireland it is Judge O'Brien; but he was compelled to declare that the city was perfectly free from crime. I understand it is customary with the police to lay before the Judge at Assizes, when he comes to administer the law, documents connected with crime and violence. Some of these are private documents, no doubt; but, surely, if documents showing that the people had acted in a bad way had been laid before the Judge, he would not have been the first to say that the calendar was light. I am informed that the Police Authorities refused to make any report as to this case, and that they refused to have the question raised one way or the other. The position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman is quite in accordance with the attitude which he has assumed since he entered upon his present Office. If the Government appoint a number of men to the magistracy; if these men come together and declare that an investigation into any particular matter is required, I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has a right to set up the opinion of a Resident Magistrate against the opinion which they express? I would ask him to supersede the magistrates altogether rather than that, in opposition to a body composed as it is in Ireland of men of all shades of opinion, including Tories and Orangemen, he should take the advice of such men as Captain Plunkett. I should be even willing for him to do that, because the effect would be to discredit the system in the opinion of the people. I am, however, satisfied in one sense with the action of the right hon. Gentleman, because I believe that his conduct towards the local magistrates will drive them into such open revolt against the spirit of the right hon. Gentleman's administration that they will refuse to carry out such portions of the law as the right hon. Gentleman wishes them to carry out, and throw up the Commission of the Peace altogether, in order to allow Captain Plunkett and others like him to administer the law of the country. On the other hand, I think that law and order could be very easily maintained if the magistrates were allowed to exercise that discretion which their appointment to the Commission of the Peace implies.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I think the Committee will be of opinion that the tone of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland towards the hon. Member for South-East Cork (Mr. Hooper) is a remarkable indication of the manner and temper in which the right hon. Gentleman and the Irish Administration generally receive representations from Gentlemen on this side of the House, and all representations coming from Ireland asking for inquiry into local circumstances in order to get justice and fair play. The indication is unmistakable, and must be apparent to every Member of the Committee. What is his position in this case? It is that the right hon. Gentleman gets up in this House, and puts the reply of the Resident Magistrate against the entire weight of opinion of 20 local magistrates. The right hon. Gentleman is prepared when any case of this kind is brought before the House to treat as final and convincing any story put on paper by the parties who are accused, and are, consequently, interested. In this case of the disturbances in Cork in June last, and the action of the Cork magistrates, what was the reply to the Under Secretary? General Buller says that the Government have no adequate information on which to grant an inquiry. But have they looked for information, and, if so, where? If they have looked anywhere for information it is to Captain Plunkett, who is an interested party, and has actually screened the constables who have abused their powers. Does the right hon. Gentleman expect that this will strengthen the hands of the Mayors and the magistrates in dealing with disturbances which may occur from time to time, and in the possible collisions which may take place between the people on the one hand and the constables on the other? The right hon. Gentleman has acknowledged the whole case, and I say that it is nothing but the most unblushing assertion that enables him to give calm and judicial replies of the kind he has made to the Committee. General Buller says that no evidence in support of the Resolution has been laid before the Government. But what the magistrates demanded was that an investigation should be made in order to obtain evidence. What pains have the Government taken to look for this evidence?

They have taken none whatever. They have gone to Captain Plunkett, a man in love with arbitrary power, whose conduct has been repeatedly brought before this House as a violation of the Constitutional right of the people of the City and County of Cork. It comes to this—that the right hon. Gentleman endorses the action of the constables, and is prepared to justify the conduct of Captain Plunkett, and utterly ignore all representations made from other quarters. The right hon. Gentleman has certainly the ingenuity of the sophist to a most captivating degree. He says that unless there is a strong *primâ facie* case against certain parties an inquiry cannot be granted. Well, we take the right hon. Gentleman at his word. From whom does he get his information? I presume, in the first place, it comes from Dublin Castle, from Sir Redvers Buller, and I may presume that he gets it from Captain Plunkett. Here you have the chain complete. The right hon. Gentleman stands at this Table; Sir Redvers Buller is in Dublin Castle; there is the telegraph between them, and again you have the latter telegraphing to Cork to Captain Plunkett, and it is on this statement of Captain Plunkett that the right hon. Gentleman coolly states in this House that unless a strong *primâ facie* case is made against these parties our representations cannot be listened to. No matter how serious or grave the question, or how earnestly we press our views with regard to social order in Ireland, and the avoidance of disturbances, all our representations in this House and the representations of the magistrates go for nothing. The right hon. Gentleman cannot, at any rate, contend that these representations asking for inquiry are made by the local branches of the National League, or by so-called agitators and men who are opposed to social order and peace in Ireland. They are made by men who have a much larger interest in social order in Ireland than the right hon. Gentleman would take, and a far larger interest than would be taken by Captain Plunkett. They are made by men who are interested in the peace and prosperity of the people of Cork. On what grounds, then, do you refuse to grant an inquiry? I assert that the reason why a full inquiry is refused, and why all such inquiries are refused, is because the right hon. Gentleman takes his information from interested parties. I would tell the right hon. Gentleman what our impression is with regard to cases of this kind. It is that gentlemen appointed in the capacity of Resident Magistrates, like Captain Plunkett, are distinctly interested in the prolongation of a state of disorder in Ireland; they are interested in the continuation of their employment at large salaries; they are interested because if peace and order reign in Ireland their occupation is gone. And the right hon. Gentleman pits the simple word of a man so deeply interested, a man who must, from the necessities of his position and the necessities of the case, support the police, no matter how unjustifiable their action may be—he pits the biassed statement of an arbitrary individual in Cork against the wishes of 20 magistrates. I should like, before I resume my seat, to refer to an observation made in reply to a strong case put by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton). The right hon. Gentleman is very indignant that we cast doubt on the official Returns relating to persons under police protection. We do cast doubt on those Returns; we impugn their accuracy; we say that they are made by interested parties; we impeach them upon the same grounds as we impeach the right hon. Gentleman's claim to take the evidence of Captain Plunkett against the evidence of 20 magistrates. The stronger the evidence of Boycotting, the greater the number of persons protected by the police on paper, the stronger the grounds for the retention of Captain Plunkett and men like him in their positions, who are interested in maintaining the state of things which prevails in the country. Therefore, we do impugn these official Returns; and if the right hon. Gentleman wants to get over our distinct allegation that they are prepared and concocted by interested parties in Ireland, he will lay before the House such information as will allow us to test the reliability of the Returns. The right hon. Gentleman says he cannot give the names of the people who are receiving police protection, because that would give them notoriety; but I would point out that when it suits his case he is quite ready to read extracts; it is only when it does not suit his case that the right hon. Gentleman withholds information. I entreat the right hon. Gentleman to consider our proposal—namely, that if he will not give the names and addresses of the persons alleged to be Boycotted and under police protection, he shall give, at least, the town lands where they are, without the names. Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake to furnish a Return of the town lands where the police protection has been given, which will give us the chance of testing the matter without bringing into notoriety the persons protected? The town lands are sufficiently minute for our purposes, and sufficiently wide for that of the right hon. Gentleman. Will he give us a guarantee that this information will be forthcoming? The right hon. Gentleman makes no sign. If he does not, our position will be immeasurably strengthened, and we shall be able to say when we return to Ireland that not alone are these statistics concocted, but that the right hon. Gentleman has taken no steps to show that they are accurate and true.

Mr. HOOPER: I wish to impress upon hon. Gentlemen the necessity of following the dates I have quoted in connection with this matter, because upon them a great deal depends. On the 29th of June Sir Redvers Buller acknowledges the receipt of the request of 20 magistrates of Cork for this inquiry; on the 6th of July the Mayor wrote to ask if the letter was to be regarded as final; on the 12th of July Sir Redvers Buller, after the lapse of a week, writes to say that the Government have no information which leads them to think that adequate reason exists for holding such inquiry. Now, I ask this question. Did the Government inquire during the fortnight which elapsed? If they wished this inquiry to be held, and if they wished confidence to be restored to the minds of the people of Cork in this matter, why did they not examine into the facts? Instead of doing that, they put at the end of the letter I have read a vague statement as to the want of information, which might be taken to mean that they had made inquiry and could get no information. I challenge the right hon. Gentleman to say if the Government made inquiry, and, if so, of whom? If their intentions were *bonâ fide*, why do they refuse the inquiry asked for? I trust my hon. Friends will not allow this discussion to close without obtaining from the right hon. Gentleman an assurance that this case will be investigated.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman asks if sufficient facts were before the Government whether the inquiry would be held? Of course, if any statement is made which would justify the course in their opinion it would induce them to make such inquiry; but I would point out that what the hon. Gentleman asks for would require an Act of Parliament.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to mention a case in which my constituents are concerned. I refer to the Portrush case, which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will recollect was the case of an attack made upon a body of Foresters who were on an excursion. I am in possession of some further information which is supplied by the public Press to-day. The Chief Secretary for Ireland appears to have been in some doubt as to whether the blame for the disorder which occurred ought to be laid on the Foresters or on the Orangemen. It appears that eight persons have been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour, and the Crown Solicitor declared that the Foresters and excursionists had given no provocation whatever. It is admitted that they fired no shots, although the Chief Secretary said they did, and the magistrate declared that there was no justification for the attack. These Foresters are a respectable and decent body of men; and whenever they take their annual excursion, no matter where they go, they are met at the termination of their excursions by a body of roughs who assemble, according to a plan previously arranged, for the purpose of assaulting them. Before they went on this excursion they gave notice to the police, who made no adequate arrangements for their protection. I am informed that the organizing of the disorder had been going on for a week beforehand. A body of men were picked and organized for the purpose of breaking the law; they went by excursion train; their tickets were paid for out of a certain purse. Now, will the Government any longer refuse this inquiry; will they any longer deny that the responsibility for this disorder does not lie upon the Foresters? Stones were thrown at the train, and a lady inside the train was hurt. The responsibility, if there should be a recurrence of these disgraceful proceedings, will lie with the Government if they refuse an inquiry. I maintain that the origin of these disturbances is attributable to the action of the man who organized the body of men at Coleraine and paid their railway fares to Portrush. Will the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary proclaim County Antrim under the 1st section of the Crimes Act; will he inquire what man organized the roughs of Coleraine? If the inquiry I ask is refused we shall know what to think of the conduct of the Government. I call upon the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour), as one who endeavours to preserve a reputation for frankness, to admit, in face of the language of his own magistrates, that the blame for the recent disturbances lies with the Orangemen and not with the National Foresters.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should like to point out that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton) ought to be grateful on behalf of his clients that the Crimes Act has been passed, because if it had not been for that Act there would not in all probability have been a conviction of some of the Orange rioters. The first use made of the power given by the Crimes Act has been to convict certain Orange rioters who were concerned in these riots. The hon. Gentleman has suggested that I and my right hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel King-Harman) have in this House asserted or implied that the first provocation was given by the excursionists. Now, in the various observations I have made on the subject, I have always and consistently asserted that so far as my information went—and that information appears to have been confirmed by the hon. Gentleman—the first provocation came from the roughs who went from Coleraine to Portrush. But what I have said in addition to that is that, much as I deplore the provocation, I do not think it was adequate justification for the excursionists, on their return home, firing revolvers from the windows of the train upon the unarmed crowd, who, from the position of the train, could not, and did not, make any aggression on the excursionists. That view, I am bound to say, I still adhere to. The hon. Gentleman says the police did not make adequate arrangements to guard against disturbance. The police made all the arrangements that were in their power; and I think that probably nothing will more conduce to the prevention of any recurrence of this kind of outrage than the fact that seven or eight of these rioters have been summarily convicted. It is upon such a kind of inquiry as that which has taken place in this particular case that I shall really depend for the prevention of the repetition of the scenes which both sides of the House alike deplore. I confess I greatly regret it has not been found possible to produce evidence by which the persons who fired the shots from the train could be brought up and dealt with in a similarly summary fashion. The hon. Gentleman asks me whether I will not proclaim County Antrim under the 1st section of the Crimes Act, in order that a secret inquiry shall be held. If we thought that a secret inquiry would lead to the detection of the offenders I would consider the propriety of suggesting to the Government the Proclamation of the county, as the hon. Gentleman suggests; but nothing I have heard leads me to believe that any such secret inquiry would produce the desired effect.

MR. SEXTON: When I tell the right hon. Gentleman that the battalion that attacked was organized in the town of Coleraine, and that out of a certain purse there came the money which paid for the transport of the 150 men from Coleraine to Portrush, does he not consider that I make out a case for inquiry? Does he not consider that the person who organized the attacking party is really responsible for the whole of the disorder?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The holding of a secret inquiry depends upon whether it would result in the promotion of the interests of justice. It does not depend upon the fact that some of the perpetrators of the outrage are unknown.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I suppose, in point of fact, the right hon. Gentleman is afraid of his own information; that in this case it was some magistrate who organized the attacking party. He does not want to find out whether it was or not. My experience of the North of Ireland is, that generally these disorders are organized by magistrates. I have been attacked by a crowd myself who were brought and paid for by a magistrate who now sits as a Member of this House, and who led the crowd on to the attack. I do not see why the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) should not avail himself of the 1st section of the Crimes Act and hold a secret inquiry in this case.

Mr. SEXTON: All of the eight convicted men but two had witnesses who swore these men had nothing to do with the matter. Do the Government think it worth their attention to consider whether these witnesses who swore to the innocence of the men ought to be prosecuted for perjury?

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): There is one question I wish to put to the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman), and which I put last night; perhaps he will be able to answer it now. It has reference to the Veterinary Department in Dublin. I desire a statement from the Government as to the means that are being taken to suppress pleuro-pneumonia in Dublin and the neighbourhood. The continued existence of pleuro-pneumonia in Dublin and its vicinity is a scandal to the Government, and results in great loss to the people. I want to know whether this Government, who are supposed to represent the agricultural interest, intend to take any steps to stamp out this disease, which they can easily do if they wish?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY for IRELAND (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I was prepared to answer the hon. Gentleman (Mr. M. J. Kenny) last night; but he was followed by an hon. Friend of his who put some other question, and in the course of the debate this particular matter was lost sight of. I think that if the hon. Member will consider what the Government have done in regard to the existence of pleuro-pneumonia in Ireland, especially in Dublin and district, he will find they have done a great deal since they have been in Office. They recognize the importance of stamping out pleuro-pneumonia to the full extent to which the foot-and-mouth disease was stamped out. We are fully alive to the fact that if proper precautions are not taken in Ireland, especially near Dublin, Irish dealers will run the risk of having English and Scotch markets closed to their cattle. The hon. Gentleman must always be aware that the whole body of his Colleagues from Ireland do not entirely agree with him on this matter, and that Questions have been put to the Chief Secretary from time to time rather condemning the action of the Government as being too severe. Of course, it is impossible, in the endeavour to stamp out the disease, to prevent considerable individual injury being done. The hon. Gentleman will bear me out when I say that in order to stamp out a disease in a country we must in every district declared to be infected enforce the most stringent regulations. These steps the Government intend to take. I may mention there has been a great decrease during the past 12 months in the number of cases of pleuro-pneumonia. I am not quite sure that I can at this moment lay my hand upon the actual number of cases; but I can assure the hon. Gentleman that the decrease is very marked indeed. In 1885 the number of outbreaks was 389, and animals attacked 1,246; in 1886 the outbreaks numbered 138, and the animals attacked 1,050. Since then very stringent measures have been taken, especially in the district surrounding Dublin, and the slaughter of animals may be said to have been wholesale. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that every precaution has been taken and will be taken to stamp out the disease.

Mr. M. J. KENNY: Let me explain to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that I quite agree with those who say that large districts should not be unnecessarily proclaimed. What I wish to suggest as a remedy is that the power of slaughter resting with the Veterinary Department should be exercised in the wholesale manner he speaks of. The disease should be stamped out, no matter what the cost; thousands of pounds may be lost by compulsory slaughter, but I am persuaded that in the long run many more thousands will be saved.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I desire to call the attention of the Chief Secretary to a matter the consideration of which will not occupy more than a very few minutes. At the same time, it is one of considerable importance to a large class of people. It is with regard to the controversies which take place around the whole Coast of Ireland between the persons who are entitled by

Charter to the fishings in the rivers, and the fishermen outside who have a right to fish in the open sea. I brought this matter before the right hon. Gentleman's Predecessor in Office, and he promised to appeal to the Fishery Inspectors to have the matter investigated in the different parts of Ireland. According to the old theory, the Fishery Inspectors were not allowed to interfere or to take any part in the controversies with regard to boundaries between the claimants to the different fisheries; but the Predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman—namely, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) did undertake to have an inquiry made with regard to the fisheries in a particular part of Ireland—in the neighbourhood of Fort Stewart. I am informed that a very great deal of conflict takes place on the different parts of the coast; and what I ask the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) to do, and what I think is perfectly reasonable, is to instruct the Fishery Inspectors to inquire into the controversies which take place, and to make a Report to the Government, with the intention of having a copy of that Report, or whatever part of it the Government think desirable to make public, laid before Parliament in the next Session. I think that what I ask is so thoroughly reasonable that the Government will raise no objection to my request. At present, each party considers itself aggrieved, and I have not the slightest doubt that each party—I mean those who have Charter rights and those who have Common Law rights—opposes the other, and that each party is also naturally disposed to complain that the other encroaches even where, in point of fact, there is no encroachment at all. Under these circumstances, I think it would be a beneficial occupation for the Inspectors, during the Recess, to make a Report in respect to the rights of the different parties, and then, if the Government think fit, I will move for a copy of the whole or whatever part of the Report the Government may choose to make public.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid the Fishery Inspectors have not power to decide questions of law and right.

MR. BIGGAR: I only ask that they shall report.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If they reported, it is very possible it would get them into trouble. It would not conduce to peace; and the question would still be left as it is now—namely, to be settled by the Courts of Law. I do not think anything can be done, unless by legislation we transfer the functions of a Court of Law to the Fishery Inspectors. That would be a great step; and I do not think the Inspectors are a body in whom should be vested the functions of a Court of Law.

MR. BIGGAR: I do not ask that the Fishery Inspectors should publish their Report, but that they should report to the Government, and that then the Government should use their own discretion as to whether or not they will allow the whole or any part of the Report to be published. I do not ask that these gentlemen should hold a public Court of Inquiry and give a public decision. I wish them to make private recommendations to the Government, and then, if the Government think fit, they can afterwards found legislation on the Report of their own officials.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no objection to do what the hon. Gentleman suggests, now that he has fully explained his object.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 110; Noes 55: Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 439.) [3.40 P.M.]

(2.) £1,145, to complete the sum for the Charitable Donations and Bequests Office, Ireland.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £104,809, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board in Ireland, including various Grants in Aid of Local Taxation."

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.): Upon this Vote I desire to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the working of the Labourers' Acts in Ireland, the responsibility for which rests with the Local Government Board. From the Return which was granted upon the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Wicklow (Mr. Corbet) I find that the total amount expended in the erection of cottages up to the 31st of March of this year is £153,000, and that the expenses in connection with that expenditure amount to no less than £55,026. This certainly appears to be monstrously disproportionate. It must be recollected that the Acts were passed as beneficent Acts, and passed in the interest and for the benefit of the labourers, and for no one else; and to find that a sum equal to more than one-third of the actual amount spent in the erection of cottages should have found its way into the pockets of solicitors and other professional gentlemen—in other words, devoted to a purpose which was never intended by the Act—is perfectly monstrous. Of the sum of £55,026, no less than £8,600 18*s.* has gone in the expenses of the Local Government Board. Now, this sum will have to come out of the local rates. Notwithstanding that all this expense has been incurred, only £1,633 cottages have been erected; and let me point out that though the sum of £100 5*s.* 9*d.* has been paid to the Local Government Board in respect of the cottages in Naas, not a single cottage has been erected there. I wish to move the reduction of this Vote, unless the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who is also the President of the Irish Local Government Board, gives me an assurance that these enormous expenses will be greatly contracted. At present there is a most ridiculous system of red tapeism at work in the Office of the Local Government Board. As a matter of fact, the Boards of Guardians are in the hands of the Local Government Board. Scheme after scheme has been approved of by Guardians and sent up; representations have been made; but the Local Government Board, in consequence of their supineness and inactivity, do not send Inspectors to report on the schemes. Only the other day I received a letter from a constituent complaining that though three separate resolutions were sent by the Celbridge Board of Guardians to the Local Government Board, that Board had not the courtesy to give the Guardians an answer. In another division of the same Union—though a representation was made upwards of 20 months ago—16 months were allowed to lapse before an Inspector was sent down, and nearly five months have elapsed and no report has been made. This is scandalous. We have the melancholy spectacle of labourers in Ireland clamouring at the doors of Boards of Guardians, who in turn send up schemes to the Local Government Board, asking for cottages to be built, and they receive no reply. I hope the Chief Secretary will give us his assurance that this state of things shall cease.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Kildare (Mr. Carew) has complained of the cost of carrying out the Labourers Cottages Act. It is a matter of great regret that the working of any Act of Parliament should be either costly or take a long time. I think he will see that in this case both the cost and outlay are inherent in the nature of the Act itself. It is necessary under the Act that careful examination should be made by the Local Government Board into every scheme. A great deal of the outlay has been due to the fact that in many instances the rural Sanitary Authority, the Local Authority under the Act, have not supplied the Local Government Board with all the information absolutely necessary in order that they may pronounce an opinion. A very large number of schemes have been presented to the Local Government Board, and a great strain has thereby been put on the Department. On the whole, I am disposed to think that what the officials have done is highly creditable to them. I believe that at this moment the work is very little in arrear, that it has been overtaken, and that there will be no delay in future, except such as is absolutely necessary from the fact that information is not supplied by Local Authorities. I regret I cannot give the hon. Gentleman a pledge that the expenses of working the Act will be largely diminished; but I can assure him that no effort will be spared to cut down the cost wherever it is possible to do so.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I should like to call attention to the excessive number of workhouses in Ireland. This is a question which has attracted a great deal of notice in Ireland, and especially in Ulster. It was brought before the House so long ago as 1877, when Mr. Macartney, then Member for Tyrone, moved a Resolution upon the subject, which had the support then of my right hon. and gallant Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman). The terms of the Motion of Mr. Macartney were not exactly the terms of the Motion I have upon the Paper of the House. The Predecessor of the present Chief Secretary—namely, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) — objected to the terms of the Motion of Mr. Macartney, though he eventually agreed to appoint a Commission to inquire into the amalgamation of workhouses which he did not object to, and which he thought was a matter worthy of inquiry. A Commission was appointed, and a great deal of information was obtained on the subject. At that time in Ireland opinion on this question had not advanced so far as it has at the present time. I should like to state shortly what was the result of the inquiry by the Commission; 104 Unions negatived the question of amalgamation, 11 gave an answer in the affirmative, and 23 Unions proposed the dissolution of other Unions. In one paragraph of the Report of the Commission it was said that there existed among a considerable number of ratepayers and Boards of Guardians a strong feeling that amalgamation would be attended with advantage. That feeling has grown very considerably in Ireland, and I speak with great confidence as to its growth in the North. There is a very strong feeling that the accommodation provided in the workhouses is excessive, and that the accommodation might be reduced with great benefit to the ratepayers. Let me call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) to a short statement of the decrease in the number of inmates of workhouses since 1851 taken from the Report of the Commission. In 1851 the number of inmates in the Irish workhouses was 250,000; in 1887 that number had fallen to 53,000; in 1881 the average number of inmates was 43,632. Now, there is accommodation in the Irish workhouses for 100,000 persons, roughly speaking, in excess of the average number of inmates. The excess of accommodation is distributed as follows:—26,695 in the Province of Ulster, 31,595 in the Province of Munster, 25,510 in the Province of Leinster, and 17,686 in the Province of Connaught. The Commissioners in their Report came to the conclusion, from evidence they deemed to be satisfactory, that the estimated accommodation was too high by 45 or 50 per cent. Even taking that estimate, which I think to be too low, of the Commissioners, I hold that there is considerable ground for inquiry at the present moment, and that if we could reduce the accommodation even to the extent the Commissioners thought to be necessary, very considerable relief would be given to the ratepayers. The Commissioners reported adversely to the terms of the Motion then brought before the House; but what I desire to impress on the Chief Secretary is, that since the day on which the question of the amalgamation of the workhouses was brought before the House, there has been a very great growth of opinion in Ireland, at all events in the North of Ireland, upon this question, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will look into the matter. I cannot hardly expect him to pledge himself, or to give me a definite answer now; but I hope he will see his way, at any rate next Session, to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into this matter. I believe it would be very advantageous if the inquiry were not confined solely to the question of amalgamation of workhouses, there are many other questions which might, with great advantage to the administration of the Poor Law in Ireland, be referred to a Select Committee of this House.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin, Co. N.): With reference to the question of the erection of labourers' cottages in Ireland, I should like to mention one or two facts in support of my hon. Friend's (Mr. Carew's) contention, and in opposition to the contention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. It is quite true, as the right hon. Gentleman states, that some of the delay and some of the cost are necessarily inherent in the Acts themselves. Certain proceedings preliminary to the erection of cottages are necessary, and certain expenses, of course, are incidental to those proceedings; but we have from time to time given specific instances in which the responsibility for the delay has rested upon the Local Government Board. Take the case of the Celbridge Union. The period which intervened between the application for the erection of cottages and the date at which the Local Government Board sent down their Inspector was no less than 16 months, and a period of five months has elapsed since the Inspector was sent down without any answer having been given on the subject by the Local Government Board. If that is so, what is the use of telling us in general terms that the delay is altogether due to or inherent in the working of the Act? The delay in the case of the Celbridge Union clearly lies with the Local Government Board, and with their mode of managing matters. I am personally acquainted with a case in my own county, in reference to which I addressed a Question to the Chief Secretary some time ago. I pointed out that several cottages applied for in various parts of the South Dublin Union nearly two years ago are still in the process of incubation in the mind of the Local Government Board. The answer made was that the Guardians were to blame. Well, since I asked the Question on the subject the Guardians of the Union, who, as the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) knows perfectly well, belong, the majority of them, to his own political Party, have unanimously repudiated the allegations made on behalf of the Local Government Board in this House. I re-assert that the allegations are totally unfounded, and that the delay which has occurred is a delay which, for the greater part, lies with the system of red tape which seems to be inherent in every part of the Dublin Castle system. What reply is to be made to this specific instance? A general statement that these delays are not due to any action on the part of the Government Department will not do. He must give us specific answers to specific allegations made in this House, or else he must run the risk of being regarded in Ireland as merely the mouthpiece for false statements furnished to him by his subordinates in Dublin Castle. This is no new thing. We are accustomed to it year after year, and it appears to be of no use for us to make a protest in the matter. I never make a protest now in this House in the hope that it will be attended to. The more reason there is for making a protest the less hope or expectation I have that any good will result from it. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is part of the despotic Government set up in Ireland, and I acknowledge his present policy is quite in his line. He is quite right, from his point of view, in carrying out the principles upon which that despotism is founded; he cannot do aught to discredit his agents in Ireland. His agents in Ireland are appointed for a particular purpose, and that purpose is not at all to further the interests of the Irish people or to expedite the business of the country. Their work is to conduct Public Business in their own fashion, whether it pleases the people or not; and neither the Chief Secretary nor any other Member of the Government will ever dare in this House to get up and do anything which by any possibility will cast discredit upon any of his agents in Ireland. The real reason why I make this protest is that it may have some effect upon public opinion in England if it is seen how Business is managed in Ireland. We have already succeeded, to some extent, in attracting the attention of the English public to this matter; and we will continue in the process, in the hope that it will result in good to our country.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) knows, of course, that it is impossible to go into the *minutiæ* of every case in which application is made for the erection of labourers' cottages. I think that what the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) stated carries with it the conviction that the case is not really a bad one. Only three cases have been mentioned as still pending, and the fact that there are only these three cases shows that the arrears are being wiped off. I understand that the arrears have been overtaken, and that practically the schemes in most of the Unions are in a forward state. I am convinced, from what I have seen, that the Local Government Board are anxious to meet the views of the Guardians in every respect.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): They have not yet sanctioned the scheme for the South Dublin Union.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: As I have said, I cannot go into the *minutiæ* of every case.

Mr. CLANCY: You have had ample notice in this case.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I did not know it would be mentioned to-day, otherwise I would have made inquiries

Mr. CLANCY: I will bring the matter up again on Report.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: And then I will give all the information I can on the subject. I assure the hon. Gentleman and those who act with him in this matter that I have taken very considerable interest in the working of the Labourers' Cottages Act, and I have not been content in many cases with the simple Reports; but I have made inquiries to ascertain whether the delays have been the result of official neglect. There is no matter in which we ought to be more careful than upon the question of the erection of labourers' cottages, knowing what a great disappointment it must be to the labourers to find the realization of their hopes being postponed. Now, with regard to the question of the amalgamation of Unions, which was raised by my hon. Friend (Mr. Macartney), let me say that I am well aware of what took place in 1877. My hon. Friend asks for the appointment of a Select Committee. I must remind the hon. Gentleman that the appointment of a Select Committee would not be a very effectual way of doing work of this kind. It would be impossible for a Select Committee of this House to determine the cases of all the Unions in Ireland in a satisfactory way. If it comes to be a matter of the appointment of a Commission it will be found that is a very serious and costly process. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary will take this matter into his consideration, and the Vice President of the Local Government Board is at present collecting as much information on the subject through his own Inspectors and other officials as he can, and will take whatever steps for the amalgamation of the Unions as are considered necessary.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I rise for the purpose of making a suggestion to the Government, and that is that they should postpone this Vote until to-morrow, so that the rest of the Votes in this Class may be taken at this Sitting, and the work of Supply in this way expedited. It is perfectly true that experience teaches me that the Local Government Board Inspectors in Ireland have considerable sympathy for the working of the Labourers' Act, but that their action as well as that of the Local Government Board is very slow, and I have not always been able to understand the delay. As far as the action of the Inspectors is personally concerned, during the small experience I have had of the working of the Act, I have found that Inspectors giving evidence before the Privy Council have always exhibited sympathy with the working of the Act, and that they are really and truly anxious to promote the interests of the labourers. I must say that every effort is made by the Privy Council to intimidate these men, and that they are treated sometimes by Members of the Privy Council with as much discourtesy as the elevated position of the Privy Councillors allows them to indulge in. They are attacked by innuendoes, and statements are sometimes made that they are leaning to the popular side, which none of them do. I have heard them practically chastised and reproved before the entire body of the Privy Council, and before many landlords and agents. It is such action which has stopped the building of labourers' cottages. Except so far as delay goes, I would not sympathize with any attacks made upon the Local Government Board Inspectors. There is just one other important question I should like to refer to. Reference has been made to the condition of affairs in the New Ross Union, and I should like to know what the Government intend to do respecting that Union? Is it not a fact that something like a truce has been proclaimed between the contending parties? I know but little as to what the exact facts are in the locality, but I am of opinion that something like an accommodation has been broached in the district. That being so, I do not see why the Government should not put the New Ross Union into the hands of representatives of the ratepayers. I advise the Government, in the interests of peace and order, not to dislocate local government further by keeping open the sore. A great deal of Boycotting has been carried on in order to carry out the strike, with which I have had the fullest sympathy in the interest of public liberty, against the payment of rates in consequence of the very unjust and unwarrantable suppression of the New Ross Board. I do not know exactly why, but something like a settlement seems to be possible. I should like to know what objection there can be to reinstating the old Board.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the hon. Gentleman has made a suggestion with the object of promoting Public

Business to-night. That being so, I shall be glad to accede to his request, if he is of opinion that we shall really make material progress this evening with the less important Votes. I shall be glad to ask that this Vote be postponed till to-morrow. Of course, I should like it to be disposed of to-morrow; but I do not wish to press for a formal understanding.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: All the Members on these Benches are agreed.

Mr. BIGGAR: No, no!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. T. M. Healy) will excuse me from answering now the question he has put to me. It will probably raise a good deal of discussion, and it had better be raised to-morrow. I beg to ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

(3.) £3,456, to complete the sum for the Record Office, Ireland.

(4.) £9,126, to complete the sum for the Registrar General's Office, Ireland.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Before we pass this Vote, but without any intention of delaying the Committee unnecessarily, I should like to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the manner in which the Registrar General prepares the statistics of agricultural produce, and of the prices thereof. It is of the highest possible importance that the Commissioners who have under the new Land Act to revise judicial rents should have the assistance of accurate and carefully compiled tables of the prices of produce when they come to discharge their duties. Now, I maintain that the Registrar General does not prepare these tables at all in a proper manner. The prices of all the leading articles of agricultural produce, such as oats, barley, wheat, butter, cattle, &c., are quoted in the Registrar General's Report most erroneously, and, in the majority of cases, much higher than the average market prices in Ireland. Instead of basing his Report of the prices of agricultural produce on figures sent up to him from various parts of the country, the Registrar General bases his Report exclusively upon the prices in the Dublin City markets, which are on the average 20 per cent, 15 per cent, and, at the lowest computation, 10 per cent higher than those in the Provincial towns. It has been, also, thought that the Registrar General takes the retail prices quoted in the Dublin markets. That, we hold, is a most erroneous and unscientific way of preparing tables which are of such importance to the agricultural community, especially at the present moment. I do not desire to go in detail into the matter. If I had been aware that this Vote would have come on to-day, I would have been in a position to give a large amount of information to the Committee, and to have laid many facts before the Government to lead them to adopt my view. All I ask is that they will inquire into the matter, and ascertain from what source the Registrar General derives his information and in what way he makes up his tables?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I entirely agree with the view of the hon. Gentleman that the question of correct tables of the prices of agricultural produce is one worthy of great consideration, and we have already sanctioned the expenditure of a certain sum of money to aid the Commissioners in what they have to undertake in regard to the revision of judicial rents. In view of recent legislation accurate Returns are most necessary, and the preparation of these tables, I know, has received considerable attention at the hands of the Registrar General, who takes great interest in the work. I shall be glad to inquire what steps can be taken to insure the supply of the most accurate information.

Mr. BIGGAR: I hold very strongly to the opinion that the prices in leading markets are, after all, the best tests. I sometimes look for the quotations of different minor markets; but, after all, nothing gives a person engaged in a particular business so good an idea of the real state of the market as the quotations of the leading markets. Take the article of butter, for instance. The quotations of the Cork Butter Market afford a much better test than those which appear in local newspapers regarding similar markets. The person who supplies the local newspaper with the quotations is, as a rule, a person interested in the matter, and he gives quotations which are not so much real quotations as quotations which he desires to see. Therefore it is that I entertain a strong idea that we ought to be influenced as much as possible by the prices of the leading markets. It must be borne in mind that with regard to a great many articles the quotations only relate to retail transactions; of course, in a retail market a farmer naturally gets a higher price than he gets in a wholesale market. Under these circumstances, I think the right hon. Gentleman will do well to consider whether or not it would be better to confine his attention upon this question to the leading markets.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think there is a very wide difference of opinion between the hon. Gentleman and myself.

MR. T. M. HEALY: There is this method I would recommend—the practice which prevails in Scotland in their Fiars' Courts there, the decisions of which are admitted by everyone all over the country to be impartial. I would suggest, if the Registrars General are in any way to affect judicial rents, that something of an analogy should be followed—that he should ascertain what is the practice in these Fiars' Courts in Scotland, which practically decide what the Ministers' Money is to be. That being decided as the agricultural values, there must be some means of striking an average between the central markets in Edinburgh and the local markets. I do not profess to know what the result in Scotland is; but I know the practice is generally satisfactory to the people of Scotland. It is practically a decision as to prices which rules, to a great extent, all over the country; and if the Registrar General could ascertain what the practice there is, I think considerable interest would in future attach to his statistics, in view of the fact that judicial rents are to be varied in future on prices.

MR. DEASY: This is a subject on which I wish to say a few words. I agree entirely with the observations which have fallen from the hon. Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn) as to this objectionable and utterly misleading method of compiling agricultural statistics. I maintain that not only ought the Registrar General to have regard to the average prices throughout the year, but he ought also to have regard to the quantity of agricultural produce which is sold at a particular period of the year. What occurs in Ireland is this. Nine-tenths of the farmers send their oats and barley and wheat before Christmas to market. The consequence is, that at later periods of the year—at the end of the year the price of oats, which at an early period of the year might be only 4*s.* a cwt., is, owing to the scarcity of oats, quoted at 8*s.* and 8*s.* 6*d.* a cwt. What do we find from the Return of the Registrar General? It is this—that the average price of barley, of wheat, and of oats in Ireland is the price of the principal markets of the country. Take the months of May and June, whatever quantity of these cereals happen to be in the market is in the hands of large merchants. This is an utterly fallacious and improper method of compiling these Reports. And the same thing applies to butter. But as to cereals, last year when the question of the prosperity of Ireland and other matters were under consideration, I think the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, talking about the average price of oats, told us that the average price of oats was about 9½*d.* or 9¾*d.* the pound. It was that price for one month in the year, but that was the month in the year when no farmer in Ireland has a single pound to sell. As I said, the same thing occurs in regard to butter. The price of butter in Cork Market, it was stated the other night, was enormously high. What is the reason of that comparatively high price of butter in Cork Market? It is, that the right hon. Gentleman did not quote the average price of Cork Market for the season during which farmers sent in a quantity of butter. He quoted the highest price of butter during the last three months, when the price was inordinately high. I maintain that when agricultural prices are quoted in this House regard ought to be had to the quantity of the particular article which is sold, and also that regard ought to be had to the quantity which is sold at the highest price, and also to the quantity which is sold at the lowest price. It is contrary to what ought to be done by gentlemen occupying a high position that they should come here and take from newspapers the highest price they can find quoted. I have already stated that it is the practice of Irish farmers to sell the greater part of their cereal crops immediately after harvest, and that in the spring and the early part of the summer they do not have anything in their barns to sell. Everyone knows that a low price of agricultural produce prevails in Ireland now. Wheat is now so low that it does not pay farmers to grow it. They grow barley very largely instead, and they also grow a very large quantity of oats. Everyone knows what the harvest turned out in Ireland last year. Not one farmer in 20 was able to get the top price for his barley, and not one in 20 got but the lowest price for his oats. What do I find quoted here from *Thom's Almanac?* The price of wheat was 10*s.* per cwt. All I can say is this. I know hundreds of farmers in the South of Ireland, some personal friends of my own, who were very glad to get 5*s.* per cwt. for their wheat, and I do not know a farmer who got this top price for his wheat. In some cases it was black and discoloured owing to the moisture of the weather. But I come to a more glaring case. The price of oats is returned at 8*s.* a cwt. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that there was no such price in Ireland. He knows the average price was not more than 3*s.* He knows more than that. Many farmers were obliged to bring their oats back again because no one would buy them off them. To give you an idea of the state of the harvest in Ireland last summer, it is a matter of common notoriety, having appeared in the newspapers, that in hundreds and thousands of cases farmers carried their oats into the market and could not sell them. The average sack of oats weigh two cwt. in a good year. Last year it did not weigh half a cwt. It was nearly all chaff, and the result was the poor men had to carry it home again and give it to their cattle. The price of oats then is over-stated almost three-fourths, because I maintain that if you take the average weight given for the greater quantity of that sold last year it would not exceed 3*s.* or 3*s.* 6*d.* per cwt. instead of the enormous price of 8*s.* the cwt. I recollect 15 years ago getting 8*s.* or 9*s.* for the best oats in the South of Ireland. Last year I saw them sold for 4*s.* 3*d.* I know many more experienced farmers than I am who are unable to get a better price in the Province of Munster. What do oats make in the mountainous districts? Many farmers were obliged to turn their cattle into it and let them eat the straw. In a great many other cases it did not pay for the trouble of threshing it out. I know some cases where the men were obliged to rake the crop up. Then, coming to barley, we are told that the Irish farmers ought to turn their attention to barley more than they do—that they ought to grow it instead of oats and wheat. And it is pointed out as an argument for this advice that an enormous quantity of malt and an enormous quantity of barley are imported into Ireland from foreign countries for the purpose of growing and distilling. Barley was grown to a large extent in Ireland last year; but I do not think it will be grown to anything like the same extent again, because it is one of the most risky crops that can be grown. Unless the weather is favourable, and unless the soil is good, it is a losing game to grow barley at all. As a matter of fact, at the Bandon distillery and other distilleries in the South of Ireland, where an enormous quantity of barley is purchased year after year, I am aware of this—and I can give the right hon. Gentleman figures and facts which will place my statement beyond dispute—the average price of barley was not a quarter of what it was in the years previous to last year or the year before. Take my own case. I recollect having sold barley a few years ago at £1 per barrel. Last year I had to sell it at 12*s.* Barley per cwt. was 8*s.* last year—that is, 16*s.* per barrel. If the right hon. Gentleman will take the trouble to write to a gentleman who was up to a short time ago a Member of this House—he sat for the borough of Bandon, and he was one of the greatest distillers in the South of Ireland—or if he will take the trouble to communicate with Mr. Shaw, another gentleman who occupied a prominent position in this House a short time ago, and who is connected with a prominent distillery—he will find the average price of barley was not 4*s.* last year. And, as a matter of fact, the Bandon distillery bought barley at very much less than 4*s.* a cwt. The farmers were obliged to give it to their cattle. It was absolutely unsaleable. Here we have the highest price given by Guiness's for the best barley last year quoted in *Thom's Almanac.* If I was to quote the average price of barley throughout the country I would not say 2*s.* 6*d.* a cwt., because it has been given to the cattle for want of buyers. Such a Return as this is not satisfactory. The system which prevails is one that should be abolished, particularly in the face of the facts stated by my hon. Friend the Member for North Cork. The significance of this Return is much greater than it has been before. The other day we had, contrary to the express wishes of the National Party from Ireland, and contrary to the wishes of the great majority of the Liberal Members of this House, a clause embodied in an important Act of Parliament which directs the Land Commissioners in making reductions on the judicial rents in Ireland—and this will affect at least 200,000, or a third of the tenantry of Ireland—we have these men directed by the House of Commons in these circumstances, that in the reduction of the rents fixed between 1881 and last year they shall have regard to prices, and prices alone. Where will they get their prices? Will they come to me as a tenant farmer to give them an idea of what I have been realizing as a tenant farmer? It is said we only make these statements for our own benefit. I do not care a pinch, so far as I am concerned, what is said by landlords; but I do say this—that if they want to get at the real and true figures which have been given for agricultural produce for the last two or three years—for the last four or five years—since the passing of the Land Act of 1881, they will have to cast aside altogether the official Returns for these years—they will have to commence afresh. They must go down to the South of Ireland—to the corn market in Cork—to the butter market there, which is the greatest market for butter in the world I understand; and they must ascertain, what I have already stated, the amount of butter sold, the particular period of the year, and the particular prices. They must base their calculations on what was sold at a particular month and at a particular price, and compare it with the quantity sold at another period, and the price obtained. The market virtually closes in the month of November or December, when butter is, perhaps, at 130*s*. or 140*s*. per cwt., whereas nine-tenths of the farmers of the country have disposed of all their butter by the month of August. And in such a year as this—a dry and parched year—I do not believe that in the mountainous districts the average farmer, who keeps only a few cows, will make a single firkin of butter after the month of July. He might be able to go into the local markets, and sell a few pounds of butter occasionally; but I say this system, which is carried on in a manner contrary to that which I have indicated, and which I think is the true method of arriving at a proper conclusion, can have nothing but a disastrous effect on the future of the tenant farmers of the country. I would, therefore, suggest that the right hon. Gentleman, in view of the important nature of this Return now, and in view of the tremendous issues which I suggest are involved in a proper and a satisfactory Return, such as will not mislead the Land Commissioners—I would impress on the Government the desirability of taking this question into their best consideration. Now, Sir, to go a little further, I find potatoes quoted at 60*s*. per ton. I was up in Lincolnshire a couple of months ago, at the end of this season, and potatoes were much higher than during any season of the year. I was there about the 1st of June or the end of May, and I ascertained that at that season of the year great waste had taken place, and the farmers were glad to sell their potatoes in the London Market for 40*s*. or 45*s*. per ton. In Ireland I have no hesitation in saying the average price of potatoes—that the great bulk of potatoes were sold in the Irish markets at an average price of not more than 35*s*. per ton; and most of the Irish farmers last September would have been glad to get 35*s*. or 40*s*. a ton. Turnips are returned at 20*s*. a ton. Well, that is a matter on which I do not think I need trouble the Committee. Now, this is the last item which I shall press on the attention of the Government. Hay is returned at 45*s*. a ton. Does the right hon. Gentleman believe that the average price of hay is 45*s*. a a ton when the crop was a very large one? I have bought hay within the past three months in the present harvest, and had it delivered 10 miles to me, and passed through the Cork Market at £1 per ton. The last winter I sold an enormous quantity of hay—and perhaps I sell more hay than any farmer in the County Cork—and the average price I got in the Cork Market, for the very best hay, well saved, was from 32*s*. to 35*s*. a ton. I should have been glad to sell 100 or 200 tons of hay last September for 35*s.* a ton, if I could have got anyone to do business with me; but I could not get anyone. Yet here, in this Return, we have it quoted at 45*s.* a ton. What kind of rents can be fixed by the Land Commissioners when they come to consider these prices in relation to the prices of the present year? I suppose the prices for the present year will be put down at the same rate, perhaps more. But I do say that this is one of the most serious things which we could take into our consideration. I say that I speak upon this question with more authority than almost any hon. Member on these Benches; and I say to the right hon. Gentleman, if he has been devoting any of his time to Ireland, from contact with the farmers of his own district and with his own tenants, he must be aware that the facts I have stated cannot be controverted. Under these circumstances, I would again reiterate my hope that the right hon. Gentleman who has undertaken the government of Ireland will investigate the points I have raised, and before any serious steps are taken for the revision of judicial rents that they will take care that a true average is to be ascertained with regard to agricultural prices.

Mr. FLYNN: This question has been too often passed by, receiving but little attention, and I am glad that attention has been arrested by it on the present occasion in view of the interest taken on these Benches on the subject. My hon. Friend who has just sat down has given a clear and convincing case for thoroughly overhauling this Department. The figures on which they have based their conclusions are thoroughly misleading, and have undoubtedly acted adversely to the interest of the tenant farmers of Ireland. I would like, in connection with this very important subject, to point to one matter which it is possible has escaped the attention of Her Majesty's Ministers, and others connected with the administration of Irish affairs. The question of the price of butter has much to do with the question of rent paid, especially in the South of Ireland. To all hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who are interested, and who, I hope, will be prepared to carry out the suggestions of my hon. Friend the Member for West Mayo (Mr. Deasy), I would like to point to the evidence given before the Royal Commission by Mr. Clausby, of Cork, on this very question of butter, because we find the price of butter quoted in *Thom's Almanac,* which is the official authority, and the price of butter quoted by Ministers in this House in reply to the arguments which were advanced on the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for Cork City (Mr. Parnell) last September were utterly misleading, and as wrong as it was possible for them to be. In many cases they were 40 and 50, and in some cases 60 per cent above the price of the article in question. Mr. Clausby's method of arriving at the price of butter was this. He took the quantities delivered in the Cork markets month by month; he took the average monthly price of the various qualities, taking the mean price in each month; and, contrasting the one with the other, he took the price per pound of the quantities delivered throughout the entire year. We do not say that that can be done in regard to all commodities; but, with regard to the great staple commodity of butter, the price in the Cork Market rules the price of butter not only in Ireland, but also in Great Britain very largely. What I have suggested can be done where there are well-kept markets. Of this the right hon. Gentleman may be perfectly assured—that if the Registrar General receives explicit directions from the Government to compile these important statistics in the manner we have indicated, he will receive every possible assistance from the officials and secretaries of the local markets all over Ireland, who are all interested in arriving at a fair idea of the average price prevailing in regard to all agricultural produce. But, Sir, it does require an explicit direction from the Government to the Registrar General that this should be carried out, because there are other influences at work. There are influences at work in Ireland which find expression in this House and elsewhere, which would prevent this from being done; and if we do not get some distinct guarantee from the Government—if we do not get something definite from the Government this evening on this Vote in reference to the Registrar General's future action—no good will come of this discussion. These points will have to be raised all over again, and, in the meantime, a great injustice will have been done to the tenant farmers of Ireland.

The Rules of Debate, Mr. Courtney, will prevent me from going into the question of judicial rents; but I have my opinion as to the hardship of judicial rents, and the complaints made as to the unjust scale on which these rents are fixed, and this to a large extent by the Sub-Commissioners going on Returns prepared by the Registrar General, and not upon the circumstances of the locality. Hence you had two sets of facts. You had the Sub-Commissioners going round to administer what was intended to be a beneficent Act of the Legislature, believing that they were doing their duty conscientiously between landlord and tenant in arriving at a fair value of the land. At the same time, they were totally in error. And you have the tenant farmers —who, together with their advocates, are unable, on account of having such an authority as this, to make representations to the Commissioners—suffering this injustice, and grumbling at what they believe to be an unjust scale fixed. I believe that unjust scale was arrived at on account of the defects in the work of the Registrar General. I have no desire to be captious on this Vote, and to throw blame on the Registrar General and his office; but it is the system on which they have gone that I blame. That system is notorious. It has been pointed out in the leading paper in Dublin—*The Freeman's Journal*—the injustice of this system has been pointed out on more than one occasion. Attention has also been called to it by experts in agriculture who have written from time to time in agricultural journals; and still the Registrar General has gone on the same system which, as has been proved conclusively here this afternoon, is utterly misleading and unjust. I feel grateful to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for the undertaking he gave us to look into the matter; but I would feel additional gratitude, and I think this debate would be productive of some real ultimate benefit, if he could, on behalf of the Government, give us some assurance that he would issue some explicit directions to the Registrar General to frame these tables upon the data which we have suggested, and upon a system very different from that which at present prevails in his office.

MR. M. J. KENNY: I think we ought to have some reply from the Chief Secretary for Ireland to the able and damaging speech of my hon. Friend the Member for West Mayo (Mr. Deasy), who has made a speech of great power and of great force which cannot be disregarded. By the proposal of this Vote we are asked to undertake a further expense as to the collection of these statistics, and it is upon the accuracy or otherwise of these statistics that the fate of hundreds and thousands of Irish farmers will depend for the next three years. If judicial rents are to be fixed on rates which are infinitely too high—sometimes as much as three or four times higher than they ought to be according to the real average of prices—then the suggestion thrown out by the hon. Member for South Tyrone (Mr. T. W. Russell), that rents in Ireland will be raised instead of lowered, will become an accomplished fact. This is too serious a question to be passed by, and I should like to know what the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) has to say upon it, for he is one of the persons who will be concerned by the overhauling of judicial rents. But he is also a Member of the Government, and he is bound, as the mouthpiece of the Government, to offer some reply to the observations of my hon. Friend; because it is perfectly clear that the system of compiling these Returns year after year goes on in a manner which makes the figures when obtained absolutely worthless. *Thom's Almanac* copies from the Registrar General, and, *vice versâ*, the Registrar General copies from *Thom's Almanac.* We have no knowledge of the system adopted by the Registrar General in collecting these statistics; but *Thom's Almanac* is made up in the interests of the landlords, and I remember that when it came to be a calculation of the number of persons on the rates for the purpose of the Redistribution of Seats Act there was an alteration made there manifestly for the purpose of securing a separate representation in Parliament for the town of Lisburn. It is all very well for the Government to say that the Sub-Commissioners would go by the Registrar General in revising the rents. But I believe the Registrar General simply makes a calculation based on the figures he finds in *Thom's Almanac*, and thus they work into each other's hands. The Registrar General takes hints from *Thom's Almanac*, and *Thom's Almanac* may sometimes take hints from the Registrar General. We know the manner in which use has been made of these figures. This system of the Registrar Generalship is a humbug and imposture, and ought to be exposed; and it should be understood that the revision of rents is to be calculated on the basis of fictitious prices. That being the case, it is almost certain that, instead of receiving relief from recent legislation, the state of facts is likely to be aggravated rather than relieved by it.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I should like to call attention to the fact that the statistics of the Registrar General are made up from the Returns collected by the police, who first take them to the agents of the landlords in the district. Now, I have known in the county of Armagh, and in some other counties as well, that the police have gathered together these statistics for the Registrar General; but before they were taken to him the figures have been supervised by the local agents of the landlords, who were on the Commission of the Peace, for the purpose of making the Return as false as possible. That is the way in which the Constabulary make the Returns for flax and other things in the North of Ireland. The Returns I know are altogether fictitious, because, before being returned to the Registrar General, they are supervised by those local agents. It is, therefore, of no use for the Under Secretary to rise and tell us that the Returns are not compiled from these almanacs that my right hon. Friend has referred to, but from independent examination by the police in the district, because that is not so. Any man who has taken the least trouble about the matter knows that when the police have been out and have got the Returns, those Returns are supervised by the agents of the landlords in the district, who are in the Commission of the Peace and have power over the police. These agents correct the Returns before they go to the Registrar General, and, therefore, you are playing into the hands of the landlord party. How, then, can you come down to the House and say that certain statistics show that more rent can be paid? The rents can only be raised by the action of the police in working into the hands of the landlord party. Now, I protest against any parties coming down to this House and representing the landlords and saying that these Returns are not challenged. It is of no use for the Parliamentary Under Secretary to say that these Returns are made independently by the police. I say they are not, for the police cannot make them independent of the local magistrates, and, therefore, they are not reliable; and I join with my hon. Friend in protesting against the Returns now made by the Registrar General.

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY for IRELAND (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I have had a pretty good experience of Ireland and Irish affairs; but I must say that the statement of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Blane) came upon me with great surprise. If the hon. Gentleman can and will forward to us one single case of a policeman who, after collecting statistics, had taken them to a land agent or to a landlord before sending them to the Registrar General, I will pledge myself that I will take care that that case is sifted to the very bottom, and I believe that that policeman who may be proved to have so acted will find that he has done so at his peril. As to the main question, I did not intend to have risen; but I must say that I listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. Member for West Mayo (Mr. Deasy), and I can assure him that it shall receive the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I may point out that this Vote is reduced by £38 from what it was last year. I wish to ask the hon. Gentleman whether it is not the fact that strong complaints have been made that some of the police who were to have furnished the Returns have neglected their duty and did not do it, in consequence of the fact that they had other duties to perform in connection with evictions, &c.? I notice that the Vote is less by £38 for their services than it was last year. The question of these Returns has now become one of national importance, and I wish to say that if the service is to be continued at all, money should not be spared upon it. I would ask the Secretary to the Treasury why it is that a Vote of national importance in less this year by £38 than it was last year?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the reason for the reduction has nothing whatever to do with, and is in no way connected with, the efficiency of the collection of the statistics.

MR. DEASY: While I accept the assurance of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman) I should like to say that I hope the Government will endeavour to do something which will have the effect of bringing about the reconstruction of the Office in Dublin, which shall result in giving some really valuable guidance to the Sub-Commissioners or the Land Commissioners is assessing fair rents on leaseholders.

MR. BIGGAR: There is one question which I should like to put to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) on this Vote. The salary of the Secretary in this Vote includes remuneration for Census duties. But the Census is only taken once every 10 years. I do not see why this gentleman should have a permanent addition to his yearly salary for Census duties, and I think that, in point of fact, when the Census is taken, the Secretary gets a very large lump sum for his extra labour. Of course, this annual addition to his salary for Census duties amounts at the end of 10 years to a very substantial sum. The hon. Gentleman will, perhaps, explain that.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I believe the fact is that he used to get a bonus; but this question was raised last year, and it was then pointed out that there was an arrangement made by which he should have an extra salary for the future instead.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Nothing could be worse than to give an annual sum in connection with Census duties, because it leads to action of a mischievous kind, for the thing which ought to be done as quickly as possible is prolonged over 10 years. I remember a man engaged on this work being asked how long it would last, and he replied that "he thought, with judicious management, he could make it last to the next decennial period." The Government should consider these duties and give a lump sum to the gentlemen who have to perform them.

MR. BIGGAR: We ought not to keep up a large permanent staff with nothing to do. I believe that if this Office were re-arranged we should not have to pay so much in salaries. We want a thorough re-organization of the Public Departments, and it is the same with the Army and Navy.

Vote *agreed to.*

(5.) £12,047, to complete the sum for the Valuation and Boundary Survey, Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I wish to ask the Government when this survey will be finished in Ireland on a similar scale to that which I am glad to say has been completed for England?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): That is not in this Vote. I have an answer to give to that when the Vote comes on.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I should like to know what the Government are doing with regard to this Boundary Commission? The Boundary Commissioners went to Cork and held an investigation there for two days, and strong evidence was given in favour of the extension of the boundaries of the city so as to include some of the villas of a great many wealthy merchants. As I understand it, the Boundary Commissioners made a Report, or a recommendation to the Government at the time, to have the wishes of the great majority of the ratepayers carried into execution. But for the last half-dozen years since that Boundary Commission went to Cork and made that recommendation nothing has been done. Now, I should like to know whether that delay has been caused by the Boundary Commissioners themselves, and, if not, who is responsible? I need hardly point out to the hon. Gentleman that this matter is one of the most vital importance to the ratepayers of the city. Those who are best able to pay for the lighting of the city and for keeping it in order take care to reside outside the boundary, and pay nothing to the municipality. The recommendations of the Commission, if not carried out now, will have to be revised in a couple of years more, and after that next revision and inquiry we shall have another delay of half-a-dozen years, so that this century will probably see no alteration. I would ask the hon. Gentleman in charge of this what he intends doing in connection with it—whether he will make inquiries and see that the recommendations have been made by the unanimous direction of the Commissioners; and, if so, whether he will see that these recommendations are at once carried into effect? Will he do away, once and for all, with this glaring injustice to the ratepayers of the city?

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I have called attention many times to the negligence with regard to the Report of the Boundary Commissioners, which was given as far back as 1881.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): It was 1879.

Mr. M. J. KENNY: The Commission was appointed in 1879, and the Report came out some time afterwards. The then Commission made some recommendations, and with them they sent plans of the different boroughs in Ireland, with suggestions for the alteration of the boundaries. Well, Sir, that Report has been before Parliament for many years, and we have repeatedly referred to it, year after year, on the Estimates; but, notwithstanding all that, nothing whatever is done. Now, Sir, I think that my hon. Friend ought not to be satisfied with a mere assurance from the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson), who, of course, is bound to give an assurance of some kind to placate opposition, that he will inquire into this matter. We want to know what is to be done. There is a wealth of material as to the views of the ratepayers, and there are the recommendations of the Commissioners themselves. These recommendations have been before Parliament so long a time that the ratepayers believe their adoption will not be passed. Successive Governments have done absolutely nothing in the question. This is a question pre-eminently for the present Government. As their conscientious Predecessors have not been successful, here is a splendid chance for them to see whether they cannot be successful. So far as I can ascertain, all residents in the boroughs in Ireland are extremely anxious to see the recommendations of the Commission carried into effect at once.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): The present Government ought not to be slow in giving legislative effect to the Report of the Commissioners. That Report deals not only with the City of Cork, but with the boundaries of all the principal towns in Ireland, and proposes to adjust and improve the boundaries everywhere. In the City of Dublin we have a number of excrescences in the form of townships lying beyond the City, but having the benefit of all its institutions and advantages, and of all the expenditure which it has been obliged to incur. These townships ought to be in the City of Dublin. These are things which have been before the country for quite seven years; and I think the Government ought to take up the recommendations of their own Royal Commission, and give them legal form and binding effect.

Mr. JACKSON: I can only say that I will inquire into this matter. I do not know whether it is the fault of the Commissioners or not.

Mr. M. J. KENNY: It is not their fault; it is your fault.

Mr. JACKSON: Well, if it is our fault, I can only say that I will look into it. But it does not rest with the Department—it rests with the Government to assign the means of putting it right.

Mr. BIGGAR: I should like to call the hon. Gentleman's attention to the fact that four temporary valuers and surveyors have been got rid of; but, at the same time, four permanent valuers and assistant surveyors have been added to the staff at a much lower salary. I would ask what is the reason for the addition of these four assistant surveyors and valuers? I think the principal valuation and survey of Ireland took place many years ago, and it does not seem to me that there has been any occasion for an addition to the permanent staff.

Mr. JACKSON: Four supernumeraries of a high class have been dispensed with, and four of a lower class have been added.

Vote *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

QUESTIONS.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked, Whether the Government had come to a decision as to the extension of the Allotments Bill to Ireland?

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's) said, that the matter had been very carefully considered, and after deliberating with the Irish Officers the Government had come to the conclusion that they could not extend the Bill to Ireland for reasons which he would state to-morrow. One reason was that so late a period of the Session had been reached that no time could be found for discussing the large number of Amendments that must be introduced if the Bill were to be extended to Ireland.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, that the discussions that would arise upon the new clause excluding Ireland from the Bill would probably occupy as much time as would be occupied by the Amendments consequent upon its inclusion. Time, in fact, might be saved by allowing the measure to extend to Ireland.

Mr. MASON asked whether the decision of the Government applied to Scotland also?

Mr. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir; it does. With regard to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), he might say that the period of the Session was only one of the reasons which he would have to state to-morrow; and he hoped that when the other reasons were stated the hon. and learned Member's fear with reference to the time necessary to discuss the new clauses would not be realized.

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 1*st September,* 1887.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—Ailwyn Edward Fellowes, esquire, *for* the County of Huntingdon (Northern or Ramsey Division).

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Civil Service Estimates; Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments, Votes 38, 39; Class III.—Law and Justice, Votes 24, 26, 33; Class I.—Public Works and Buildings, Vote 23

Resolutions [August 31] *reported.*

Public Bills — *Committee* — Copyhold Enfranchisement * [359]—r.p.

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Trinidad and Tobago * [368]; Tramways (War Department) * [246], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE—MONEY ORDER DEPARTMENT—THIRD CLASS CLERKS.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) (for Mr. Hobhouse) (Somerset, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether all the third class clerks in the Money Order Department of the Post Office have been for some years, and are still, receiving much lower salaries than third class clerks in other Departments of the Post Office; and, if so, what steps it is proposed to take to place them on an equality with the other third class clerks, and to recompense them for the comparative loss they have sustained; and, whether any appointments elsewhere have been offered to the clerks now in the Money Order Office that would benefit them without inflicting loss of seniority and position?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): The Question of the hon. Member refers to the few clerks who still remain on the old third-class of the Money Order Office. It is not my intention to make any alteration in their salaries. Two of them have recently been appointed to other offices, and, as fitting opportunities occur, I shall be glad to promote the others, if duly qualified.

PRIVATE EXECUTIONS ACT, 1868—EXECUTION OF ISRAEL LIPSKI AT NEWGATE.

Mr. F. PARKER (Oxfordshire, Henley) (for Mr. Kenyon) (Denbigh, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that at a recent execution a large crowd was collected round Newgate Prison, and that on the hoisting of the black flag cheers were raised by those assembled; and, whether, having regard to the spirit of the Private Executions Act, the Government have power to enable the authorities at Newgate to dispense with the hoisting of the flag, and thus prevent these public demonstrations?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Mr. Speaker; my attention has been called to this matter. The Rules made by the Secretary of State, under the Act of 1868, are now under revision. The question of dispensing with the hoisting of the black flag will be considered; but I must not be understood as pledging myself to adopt the suggestion of my hon. Friend. Some public intimation that an excution has taken place is, I think, desirable.

RIVERS POLLUTION—THE THAMES AT BLACKWALL.

MR. F. PARKER (Oxfordshire, Henley) (for Mr. KENYON) (Denbigh, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the statement, by Mr. Mackie, that the texture of Thames water at Blackwall is that of ink; whether the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works is responsible for this alleged condition of the River; and, if so, to what authority; and, whether the Government contemplate any legislation on the subject at an early period?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have called the attention of the Metropolitan Board of Works to this matter, and the Board informs me it is doing all in its power to improve, by chemical agency, the bad state of the River in this district. The Board of Works is responsible, in so far as the state of the River is due to an imperfect regulation of sewage; but it must be remembered that the long-continued drought of this year has greatly aggravated the difficulties they have had to contend with. I hope that when the new works now in progress are completed the causes of complaint will be lessened, if not removed, and no legislation will be necessary.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—GRAND JURY OF DONEGAL — LIFFORD ASSIZES — CONVEYANCE OF PRISONERS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.) (for Mr. O'HEA) (Donegal, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the Grand Jury of the County Donegal, at the recent Summer Assizes in Lifford, refused to present the amount submitted to them as the estimated sum required for the conveyance of prisoners, on the ground that a large portion of the expenditure was unnecessary; if part of the expenditure was for "car hire and sundries" in connection with the levying of fines against persons who neglected to take out dog licences; if, in the case of a widow named Catherine Curran, who was unable to pay a small fine for having a little dog unlicensed, Sergeant Mahoney, of Gweedore, accompanied by a constable, brought this poor woman, in very inclement weather, from her cabin to the barracks, a distance of six Irish miles, and after refusing to allow his men at the barrack to subscribe the amount of the fine, took her by car to Letterkenny, a distance of 26 Irish miles, to be kept in Bridewell for 24 hours; whether the same police sergeant charged for a special car to attend the Falcaragh Petty Sessions, 12 miles distant, to prosecute a man named James Sweeny for not registering his dog, and subsequently, because Sweeny through poverty was unable to pay the fine, went to the further expense of hiring a special car to take him in custody to Letterkenny, a distance of nearly 30 Irish miles, to be kept for 48 hours in Bridewell; and, whether it is the intention of the Executive in Ireland to prevent this waste of public money in connection with dog licences?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Grand Jury of the County of Donegal at the recent Summer Assizes approved of a less sum than that submitted to them as the estimated expenditure for the conveyance of prisoners during the ensuing half-year. Their ground for doing so was that they considered it an over-estimate, having regard to the actual expenditure during the previous half-year. The part of the expenditure in connection with dog licence cases was extremely small. I have been unable, owing to the short Notice of this Question, to obtain a Report as regards paragraphs 3 and 4, which necessitated a local reference. As regards paragraph 5, the Inspector General of Constabulary reports that it is of rare occurrence that any expense whatever has to be incurred for levying fines in dog licence cases. I may add that the sum submitted to the Grand Jury was £400, and the sum awarded by them was £300.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL—THE INJURIOUS INSECTS ACT — THE COLORADO BEETLE.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Whether he has noticed the report in *The Mark Lane Express* that the Colorado beetle has appeared in Germany; if he has official information if such is the case or not; and, if that insect has appeared in Germany, whether precautions will be taken to prevent its importation into this country?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY (Lord JOHN MANNERS) (Leicestershire, E.): Official information of the existence of the Colorado bettle in Germany was received on August 5, and the Papers were at once referred to the agricultural adviser of the Department, Mr. Whitehead, who advised that particulars should be obtained from the German Government as to the circumstances in which the beetle had been found in Germany, as well as to the extent of its depredations. A reply has been received from Germany; and Mr. Whitehead had expressed his opinion that, as the German Authorities have taken such prompt steps to prevent the spread of the Colorado beetle, and, as it seems to have been confined to two small areas, it is hardly necessary for the Government to adopt measures to interfere with the importation of haulm or soil of German potatoes, or to put the Injurious Insects Act into operation. The German Government have been requested to furnish a further Report on the subject in the course of a few weeks.

METROPOLITAN POLICE — EX-POLICE SERGEANT DRUMMOND.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) (for Mr. LAWSON) (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the case of ex-Police Sergeant Drummond; can he state what his offence was; whether his punishment was increased because he appealed from the decision of his Superintendent to the Chief Commissioner of Police; and, if so, whether he had asked to have his innocence proved by witnesses; and, why he was refused a hearing, and punished more severely?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): The last complaint against Sergeant Drummond was by a private individual for assault and using offensive language when on special duty on the 21st of June. His punishment was not increased because he appealed to the Chief Commissioner. The Chief Commissioner thought that he was not fit to discharge the duty of sergeant under the circumstances. He was not refused a hearing, and the evidence of a witness who wrote that he did not see the assault was carefully considered.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) inquired whether the sergeant had been reduced in consequence of his past conduct?

MR. MATTHEWS said, he had seen a list of prior charges against Drummond, and he was informed that he was reduced for general misconduct, and not for this particular offence.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION — DESTITUTE ALIENS.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, What number of persons during the past year have been sent back to the United Kingdom from the United States, and from other countries, by reason of their being destitute aliens; whether the Labour Correspondent, or any other Department of the Board of Trade, has collected information, or is investigating facts, respecting destitute aliens located in the United Kingdom; and, whether the attention of the Labour Correspondent has been directed to the alleged effects of unrestricted immigration of destitute foreigners upon the system commonly known in East London as "the sweating system?"

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I can only give the hon. and gallant Member information with regard to the number of persons sent back from the United States as destitute aliens, and in the first six months of 1887 the number so returned was 46. Of these, nine were said to be foreigners. Information collected by the Labour Correspondent on the subject of foreign immigration into the East End of London is given in the Return on Emigration and Immigration which was presented to Parliament during the present Session. The Labour

Correspondent has already made inquiries with regard to the sweating system, and is preparing a general Report, which I hope to present very shortly.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked, whether there would be any great difficulty in collecting and publishing statistics respecting foreign immigrants into this country from European ports similar to those statistics which were published by the Board of Trade as respected foreign immigrants from ports outside Europe?

Baron HENRY DE WORMS said, he was afraid that there would be very great difficulty in collecting such statistics. The question had been, and was still being, considered by the Labour Department.

POPULATION—DEATHS FROM STARVATION IN THE METROPOLIS AND ALL IRELAND.

Captain COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, How many persons per 1,000 of the population have died from starvation or privation in the Metropolis of London and in all Ireland respectively in each of the past five years ending 1st January last?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Board of Trade do not possess the information required by the hon. and gallant Member; but I understand that it may be obtained from Returns supplied by the Home Office and the Irish Office respectively.

LAW AND JUSTICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—THE GAINSBOROUGH MAGISTRATES—SIR HICKMAN BACON.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the conviction and fining of a number of poor persons at the instance of Sir Hickman Bacon, baronet, by the Gainsborough magistrates, on Tuesday, 9th August, under the following circumstances:—A rumour having been set in circulation by some individual, as a hoax, to the effect, that, as Sir Hickman had not contributed very largely to the local Jubilee Fund, he had thrown a pea field open to poor people; a large number of the poor of the neighbourhood availed themselves of what they believed to be his generosity, for which they were summoned and fined in some cases 4*s.*, for peas not worth more than 1*s.*; whether it was admitted by the prosecution that such rumour had been circulated for three or four days previously, and was a "widespread rumour," and that there was written in chalk on the gate of the field "This field is thrown open as a Jubilee Treat;" whether it was proved that the persons summoned acted under the *bonâ fide* belief that the field had been thrown open to them; and, if so, by what interpretation of the law could they be held guilty of any offence; whether the prosecutor offered to withdraw the summonses if the defendants would pay the costs, and, on their stating their inability to pay, insisted on a conviction; and, whether, having regard to all the above circumstances, he will order the fines to be refunded?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the magistrate's clerk that it was not suggested that the rumour referred to was set in circulation as a hoax. Sir Hickman Bacon was the largest contributor to the Jubilee in Gainsborough and three adjoining parishes, and, moreover, placed 50 acres of his park at the disposal of the Jubilee Committee. It was not admitted by the prosecutor that the rumour had been circulated or was widespread, and nothing was written in chalk on the gate. There was no proof given, or offered, that the persons summoned acted under a *bonâ fide* belief that the field had been thrown open to them. The prosecutor's solicitor offered to withdraw the summonses on payment of costs; but I am informed that the defendants, except one, preferred to be fined rather than to pay costs without a conviction. I collect that no fine was imposed for the value of the peas, or for any larger amount than the costs; and, having regard to all these circumstances, I see no ground for interference.

Mr. CONYBEARE asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the magistrate's clerk who supplied the information was solicitor to Sir Hickman Bacon; and whether he would allow him to submit a Report of the matter for his consideration?

MR. MATTHEWS said, that he was not aware of the fact stated by the hon. Gentleman. He should be very glad to see any information which the hon. Member had in his possession upon the subject.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—TARBERT PETTY SESSIONS — CASE OF DANIEL SCANLAN.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact that a man named Daniel Scanlan was sentenced at Tarbert Petty Sessions, on the 10th of August, to three weeks' imprisonment, and to a further term of three months if he failed to give security for his good behaviour, himself in £20 and two sureties of £10 each, for an alleged assault on a little girl whom he found tampering with the village pump; whether the evidence went to show that Mr. Scanlan, County Kerry, who is 70 years of age, and had charge of the pump for a considerable time, merely took the child by the ear and remonstrated with her; whether the people of the village have suffered much from the children injuring the pump and depriving them of the necessary supply of water; whether Mr. Sandes, who is landlord of the village, sat on the Bench during the trial and adjudicated in the case; whether Scanlan asked to have the sentence increased to four weeks so that he might have the right of appeal, and whether this was refused by Mr. Sandes; and, whether, under the circumstances, he will call the attention of the Lord Chancellor to the conduct of Mr. Sandes in this case?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton), in reply, said, the facts in the first paragraph of the Question were substantially correct. The girl assaulted was a little girl five years old, and it was not alleged that she was tampering with the public well. The evidence went to show that he dragged her by the ears and lifted her off where she was standing to the ground. Complaints had been made of children injuring the well; but it was so constructed that it could not be materially injured. The well frequently ran dry. Mr. Sandes was one of five magistrates who tried the case, and when asked if he had anything to say reply to the charge, Scanlan replied in the negative.

MR. DILLON: I wish to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he would make some inquiry as to the justice of the sentence of three weeks' imprisonment on a man of 70 years of age, where no allegation was made that the child was injured in any way?

[No reply.]

POOR LAW (ENGLAND AND WALES)—NOTTINGHAM BOARD OF GUARDIANS — COMMEMORATION PRESENTS TO OFFICIALS.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he is aware that the Nottingham Board of Guardians, in commemoration of the official opening of new Poor Law offices at Nottingham, have purchased out of the rates and presented to the Chairman of that Board (Mr. John Burton), and the Chairman of the Building Committee respectively, golden keys; if the consent of the Local Government Board to this expenditure has been given, and if funds raised from the ratepayers for the relief of the poor may legally be charged with the cost incurred by the Guardians in this respect; and, if he will direct that the attention of the auditor be called specially to this particular item, and to the general expenditure incurred by the Nottingham Board of Guardians in furnishing and decorating this building, inasmuch as, in the opinion of a large number of ratepayers, the cost incurred is extravagant, especially in face of the present depressed state of the local industries?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Board have no information as to gold keys having been purchased at the cost of the rates and presented to the Chairman of the Guardians of the Nottingham Union and the Chairman of the Building Committee in connection with the opening of the new Poor Law offices at Nottingham. The Local Government Board have not consented to any such expenditure. It is the duty of the district auditor to disallow any charge which he considers to be illegal; and it is open to any person who is aggrieved by the decision of the auditor with regard to any payment, whether he allows or disallows the payment, to appeal against the decision either to the Local Government Board or to the High Court of Justice. I will see that the attention of the auditor is drawn to the Question of the hon. Member.

THE PARKS, &c. (METROPOLIS)—VAGRANTS AT NIGHT.

Mr. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he is aware, or has been informed, that the vagrants occupying Trafalgar Square at night are only a detachment of a larger band who infest the Parks from day to day, and at night sleep on the benches in the Mall of St. James's Park, and on the Thames Embankment, and other public places; that in St. James's Park alone they amount to about 200 in number, of whom about one-fourth are women; that they lounge all day in idleness on the grass, and are well provided with food, small knots sometimes carrying in half a potato sackful at a time; that by mid-day all are provided for, and enjoy *al fresco* entertainments, accompanied by conduct and language of the grossest description, to the great scandal of the general public, and the depravement and detriment of the many children of the cleanly and industrious poor seeking health and exercise, and who cannot even play on the grass without contamination by vermin; whether the Census of tramps, which used formerly to be taken once a year, could be resumed, and a Return obtained of persons obtaining hawkers' licences, distinguishing the particular lines for which ostensibly they are granted, and the value of the stock they purport to carry; and, whether he will endeavour to secure to the deserving and industrious poor, and their children, the benefits of the open spaces of the Metropolis, which are at present monopolised by vagrants?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): I am afraid that there is some substantial foundation for the statements which appear in the Question of my hon. Friend, though some of them, perhaps, are a little warmly coloured, and dressed up with considerable powers of imagination. No doubt, some inconvenience is caused to the respectable inhabitants of London by the presence in the Parks of a number of tramps; but the question is, what is to be done? In the first place, so far as the gross conduct and language complained of in the Question are concerned, the Park Regulations contain a provision which forbids any person to commit an act in violation of public decency, or to use profane, indecent, or offensive language; and both the park-keepers and the police-constables who are told off for the Parks have strict instructions to see that these provisions are properly enforced. But if we went beyond this, and gave authority to those officers to distinguish between those of the public who ought and those who ought not to be permitted to use the benches or lie down on the grass, I think such discretion must be sometimes unwisely exercised, and would be certainly often vigorously resisted; and that, on the whole, such a change in the law, if it could be effected, would do more harm than good. I have nothing to do with the resuming of any Census of hawkers, tramps, or other persons, nor do I see how the existence of such Census would affect this question. I can only say that I have as earnest a desire as the hon. Member can possibly have to secure to the deserving and industrious poor and their children the benefits of the open spaces of the Metropolis; and that, if any practical suggestion is made to me for more effectually protecting them from annoyance, I shall give it my most careful and respectful consideration.

Mr. KIMBER: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to ask whether the officials have power to turn out any people who use gross language?

Mr. PLUNKET: Not only the power to turn them out, but to proceed against them, with a view to their punishment.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—ISSUE OF MORRIS'S TUBES AND AMMUNITION.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the issue of Morris's tubes and ammunition, sanctioned by General Order, No. 98, of 1886, to regiments of Militia and Volunteers has been stopped or suspended; and, whether, considering the difficulty of earning the Capitation Grant under the new Musketry Regulations, arrangements will be made to issue the tubes and miniature cartridges?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter), (who replied), said: The issue of Morris's tubes and ammunition has been deferred for the present in consequence of the numerous other demands on the Vote for Warlike Stores. The question of their issue will be again considered when the general requirements of next year are ascertained.

THE MAGISTRACY—(IRELAND)—VACANT CORONERSHIP OF CO. WESTMEATH.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Coronership of the County Westmeath is now over seven months vacant; whether the necessary steps have yet been taken to have the polling stations arranged for the election of the Coroner; if so, what prevents the issuing of the writ; and, whether the Clerk of the Peace has inserted the necessary notice for holding the election in the local papers and *The Dublin Gazette?*

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The information I have just received is that the magistrates have made an order fixing the polling stations, and the Writ for the election issues from the Hanaper Office to-day.

IRELAND—CORK CITY CORPORATION AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the Irish Local Government Board have recently reccommended the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury not to permit the Corporation of the City of Cork to borrow money for the erection of a Town Hall and offices; whether it has been conclusively proved to the Board that such a hall and offices are necessary to the Corporation, and will ultimately prove a saving of expense; whether he is aware that the reccommendation given by the Board, that the Corporation should apply to Parliament for an extension of borrowing powers under the Cork Improvement Act, will, in its application, entail not merely considerable expense, but, by delay incurred, possibly prevent the Corporation obtaining the desired premises; whether he will recommend the authorization of the proposed loan, as it is for a necessary public work, and one which will provide considerable employment for our artizans and labourers in this period of depression; and, whether he can state on whose reccommendation the decision of the Government was taken?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) who replied) said: The Treasury, before refusing to sanction the loan referred to, had consulted the Local Government Board, Ireland. I have not seen any proof of the absolute necessity for the proposed purchase, or of the saving to be effected. The recommendation of the Treasury, that the Corporation should apply to Parliament for further borrowing powers, was made on the ground that the borrowing powers sanctioned by Parliament have been practically exhausted. The arguments suggested by the hon. Member do not appear to me to be sufficient to justify a reversal of the Treasury decision.

In reply to a further Question by Dr. TANNER,

MR. JACKSON said, the question came before the Treasury in this way. The borrowing powers of the Corporation were £62,000, and they had exercised them to the extent of £61,500. In addition to borrowing under the authority of Parliament the Corporation might also borrow on the security of the Borough Fund; but he believed that Fund was already charged, if not to the full extent, very nearly; and it appeared to the Treasury, therefore, that the better course would be for the Corporation to apply for the sanction of Parliament.

DR. TANNER asked, whether the sum of £10,000 on the loan mentioned by the hon. Gentleman was not allowed to be raised to meet the expenditure in connection with the Town Hall? The hon. Gentleman had also omitted to answer the last paragraph of the Question.

MR. JACKSON: With regard to the last paragraph of the Question, I think the best answer I can give is that the decision of the Treasury was arrived at on the recommendation of those who are responsible for this business. With regard to the £10,000, I am afraid I have not the details with me.

Dr. TANNER said, he would again raise the question in the course of the evening.

EGYPT—LIGHT DUES ON BRITISH SHIPPING.

Mr. T. SUTHERLAND (Greenock) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware that the Light Dues now charged on British shipping by the Egyptian Government are at least double the amount which they should be, according to the Convention entered into by Her Majesty's Representative with the Egyptian Government, and published in *The London Gazette* in 1870, Clause 12 of such Convention being to the following effect:—

> "That the present tariff shall be subject to be increased or lowered according to the state of the budget of lighthouses to be drawn up by the Government every year;"

whether he can state the precise extent to which these Dues ought to be lowered in the present position of the lighthouse budget, and the extent to which they have been overcharged for some years past; and, what steps, if any, Her Majesty's Government propose to adopt for the protection of the shipping interest in this matter?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): To the first Question my answer must be similar to that given to my hon. Friend by the Secretary to the Board of Trade in February. There can be no doubt that the revenue derived from the Light Dues by the Egyptian Government considerably exceeds the expenditure. The estimated surplus for 1887 is £E.53,750. There is no Convention with the Egyptian Government on this matter; that Government in a "Notice to Maritime Trade" in 1870, Article XII., made the declaration stated in the Question; but that leaves the deduction within their own discretion. Her Majesty's Government are pressing the Egyptian Government to construct a new lighthouse on Shadwan Island in the Gulf of Suez. They do not feel justified in also pressing for an immediate reduction of the dues in view of the present embarrassed state of the Egyptian finances; but the question is not lost sight of, and the Egyptian Government will be reminded of their engagement whenever there appears to be an opportunity of modifying the charges.

COAL MINES REGULATION ACT—WEIGHTS AND MEASURES ACT—CRAIGHEAD COLLIERY, LANARKSHIRE.

Mr. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether proceedings have now been taken by the Procurator Fiscal against the owners of the Craighead Colliery, in Lanarkshire, in consequence of the inspection of their weighing machines, ordered by the Board of Trade, and the information lodged by the Chief Constable in July last; if not, whether he will direct the Procurator Fiscal to take proceedings immediately; whether an inspection of the weighing machines at the same colliery, showing results similar to the recent inspection, was made in December last, and an information lodged with the Procurator Fiscal in January or February; and, if he would explain why he declined to prosecute on that occasion?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The Procurator Fiscal has intimated to me that proceedings will be taken immediately in reference to the case referred to in the first paragraph of my hon. and learned Friend's Question. No prosecution was instituted in the case referred to in the second paragraph, as the proceedings were so irregular that no conviction could have been obtained.

FISHING BOATS ACT, 1887—THE HERRING FISHERY.

Mr. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the recent great loss of life at sea from boats engaged in the herring fishery, caused by the unprotected state of their decks; and, whether, in view of this continued and increasing loss of life, the Government will take steps to secure that reasonable protection shall be extended by owners of fishing boats to those in their employment?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The attention of the Board of Trade has not been called to any recent great loss of life at sea from boats employed in the herring fishery caused by the unprotected state of their decks. The loss of life from the cause named, and in the trade named, are this year very few. As regards loss of life from fishing boats other than drifters, the case has been considered by the Board of Trade; and I may refer the hon. Member to Sections 8 and 10 of the Fishing Boats Act, 1887; and, further, I have reason to believe and hope that the owners of fishing smacks will take measures for reducing the chances of accident.

BOARD OF TRADE (RAILWAY DEPARTMENT)—MAJOR HUTCHINSON'S REPORT ON THE BANTRY EXTENSION RAILWAY ACCIDENT.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, What is the nature of Major Hutchinson's Report on the Bantry Extension Railway accident?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Major General Hutchinson reports that the accident in question was mainly caused by the driver's want of judgment in allowing the train to acquire too great velocity in descending the long incline of one in 80, near the foot of which the station is situated, and then by his being unable with the brake power at his command to stop the train.

NEW SOUTH WALES — GRANTS OF LAND TO MISSIONARIES.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Government of New South Wales have offered a large tract of land to any missionaries who will undertake the civilization of the Natives; and, whether this offer has been accepted by the Pope and the Propaganda?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): As far as I have been able to ascertain, there is no foundation for the rumour referred to in the hon. Baronet's Question. I may, perhaps, add that the rumour appears to be inconsistent with the circumstances and the policy of the Colony.

RIVERS POLLUTION — THE RIVER THAMES.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is aware that, since his attention was called to the matter in February last, the water of the Thames has continued to be polluted by the sewage and other refuse of house boats and steam launches; whether, if the proposed byelaw of the Thames Conservancy has not yet come into force, proceedings might have been taken against the owners of house boats and steam launches under the 29 & 30 *Vict.* c. 89, s. 63, which enacts a penalty of £100 for such an offence, and a further penalty of £50 for every day during which the offence is continued; and, whether an article in *The Spectator* of the 9th July of this year on this subject has been brought to his notice?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): My attention has not been specially called to this matter since March last. The byelaws which the Conservators have made on the subject came into force on the 18th of June. Shortly after that date the Conservators addressed notices to the owners of house boats and steam launches, drawing special attention to the requirements of the byelaw as to the discharge of sewage and offensive matters into the River, with a view to the arrangements as regards the fittings of the vessels which were necessary to prevent the pollution of the River being made without delay. It was, at the same time, pointed out that any closet communicating with the River would obviously be an infraction of the byelaw, and could not, therefore, be permitted. I have seen the article referred to in the Question.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—ARREST IN GLASGOW.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether complaints have reached him that a citizen of Glasgow, Mr. J. H. Patterson, was arrested and questioned by two police constables on his way to his work; that he was searched in the open street, and then dragged to the police office, for no given reason; and that the lieutenant of police asked him there if he knew the National League was proclaimed; and, whether he will inquire into the truth of these allegations? The hon. Member said, he wished to add that in the Question as handed in by him there was a clause which had been omitted from it as printed. The clause ran thus—"Whether"——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! That was omitted by my direction.

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities) (who replied) said: A house was broken into on the date in question, and the man Patterson was stopped by the police in consequence of their observing a bulky article in an inside pocket. He was asked to give his name and address, and to show what he had in his pocket; but to all questions he replied by saying to the officers —"Go and find out." He refused to show what he had in his pockets. He was not searched nor dragged by the police. On reaching the police office he was again asked if he would show what the article was; and, having shown that it was a newspaper, he was at once liberated. The sergeant of police, who had brought him to the police office, gave a written expression of his regret to Patterson, who expressed his satisfaction with it, and told the District Superintendent that he did not wish the sergeant to be dealt with in any way for what had happened. Notwithstanding this an inquiry was ordered by the Acting Chief Constable, and Patterson was on two separate occasions invited to come to the inquiry, but did not take the trouble to come. Some conversation did take place after the newspaper was produced about the proclamation of the National League; but it was entirely of a passing kind. The Acting Chief Constable has informed the Inspector that conversation on general or political subjects ought to be avoided between police officials and persons who may be brought to the office and liberated. I have to-day received a further telegram, informing me that Patterson, on being visited by the Procurator Fiscal, has again expressed himself satisfied with the sergeant's expression of regret, and that this Question is not put by him or with his concurrence.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—CASE OF DONALD M'MURCHY, OF OBAN.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Lord Advocate, If he has made a full inquiry into the case of Donald M'Murchy, of Oban; and, if he will communicate the result of the inquiry?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): An hon. Member some time ago called my attention to this matter with a view to putting a Question; but, on learning the result of my inquiries, the Question was not asked. I had all the papers connected with the dismissal of Donald M'Murchy from the Argyllshire Police Force before me, and was at the time satisfied that there was no ground for the allegation made by Donald M'Murchy. If the hon. Member wishes the matter to be reconsidered, I shall be glad if he will inform me of the specific points on which he desires inquiry, and I shall have the Papers re-transmitted from the Crown Office to London.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER — THE CLOISTER—THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM asked the First Commissioner of Works, If, during the Recess, electric light could be substituted for the gas which is spoiling the stonework of the roof of the cloister used as the Cloak Room?

The FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. Plunket) (Dublin University): There is no doubt that the use of gas is doing a certain amount of injury to the stonework in some of the cloisters and passages of the Houses of Parliament, though this was, in the case of the Cloak Room, to some extent remedied in 1878; and I quite agree that the substitution of electric lighting is, for this reason and many others, most desirable. But, unfortunately, there is the odious question of expense to be considered in making such an improvement. I have been for some time engaged in having estimates prepared of what the cost would be; and I hope very soon to be able to submit the matter to the proper authorities, though what its reception will be I cannot say. At present, with the existing power, it is impossible to have electric light in that part of the House.

THE CIVIL SERVICE—WRITERS—DELAY IN PAYMENT OF BONUSES.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that there is often a delay of several weeks between the application of Civil Service writers for their bonuses and the issue of the Civil Service Commissioners' draft upon the Paymaster General for payment; whether such delay is at all necessary; and, whether the Treasury will direct that steps be taken to expedite the payment of Civil Service writers' bonuses as they become due, under the provisions of the Treasury Minute of December, 1886, so as to prevent any unnecessary delay in future?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): Bonuses are paid to Civil Service writers in respect of satisfactory service during a previous half-year on two days in each month; and inquiries are sent out three days before the completion of the half-year to each Department, to ascertain whether the work of the copyist has been satisfactory, and as soon as a favourable answer is received the claim of the copyist is entered for payment on the next bimonthly pay day. Under this arrangement the longest delay that can possibly arise in the payment of a claim is 14 or 15 days. Sometimes, however, applications are made before the half-year is ended, and such applicants may have to wait a longer time. In a few cases—which will not recur—there has been considerable delay while a question which had arisen was under the consideration of the Treasury; but of 514 payments which have been made this year, 320 were made within a week of the Departmental Report, and all but 14 within a fortnight.

ADMIRALTY—MERCHANT STEAMERS AS ARMED CRUISERS.

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, If he will lay upon the Table, before the Naval Estimates come on, the Agreements made by the Admiralty with steamers trading to New York for hiring them to be used as armed cruisers or otherwise in time of war, and also such Correspondence as will enable Members to understand the contracts that have been entered into?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Correspondence, which details at length the arrangements as to hiring made with steamers trading to New York, was laid on the Table of the House by command on the 18th of March last, and is numbered 5,006. The formal legal contracts based on this correspondence are in the hands of the Treasury Solicitor.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE STATION AT DRUMSNA.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether Drumsna is a sorting office for Kilmore and Hillotree; whether the day mails from Drumsna for Dublin are forwarded direct from that station; whether the night mails are first sent into Carrick-on-Shannon, passing by the Drumsna Railway Station to Dublin four hours after; and, whether he will so arrange that the night mails will be forwarded direct as the day mails now are, and thus give the people of the three districts named a much longer time within which to write their correspondence?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, inquiries would have to be instituted with reference to the several points raised; and as the Question only appeared on the Paper that morning, and it would take a few days to obtain the necessary information, he would ask the hon. Member to postpone it.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—IMPRISONMENT OF JOHN RYAN, OF CLOUGHREADY, CO. TIPPERARY.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether John Ryan, of Cloughready, County Tipperary, who was committed to prison for an indefinite term, by Mr. Cosby E. Trench, on 4th June, 1886, for taking forcible possession of his holding from which he had been evicted, is still in prison; and, if so, how long is it the intention of the Government to keep him there?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, he was informed that this man was discharged from gaol on the 30th of July last.

TOWNS IMPROVEMENT ACT, 1854—LISTOWEL.

MR. STACK (Kerry, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that offences committed against the Town Improvement Act of 1854 within the township of Listowel are tried at Petty Sessions, thereby depriving the ratepayers of the town of a sum amounting to £150 per annum, to which they are justly entitled; and, whether he will communicate with the Constabulary Authorities, with a view to directing the local police to bring all prosecutions which may be instituted under the Act before the Town Court instead of at Petty Sessions?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Inspector General of Constabulary informed him that cases of persons in which the offence took place outside the township were tried at the Petty Sessions, and in these cases the magistrates got one-half the fines; but offences against the Towns Improvement Act, and offences such as drunkenness, committed in the town, were brought before the Town Court. Such being the case, any recommendation, such as that suggested in the Question, would be unnecessary.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) said, as a matter of fact, the townspeople did not derive any benefit from the cases which were decided at the Petty Sessions.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he had answered the Question from the information he had received; but he would make further inquiries on the subject.

AFRICA (WEST COAST)—MR. J. R. MAXWELL, CHIEF MAGISTRATE OF THE GAMBIA.

SIR ROBERT FOWLER (London) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has countermanded the appointment of Mr. J. R. Maxwell as Chief Magistrate of the Gambia; whether he is aware that that appointment gave general satisfaction to the inhabitants; and, whether, in conformity with the request they have made through Governor Sir Samuel Rowe, he will re-consider his decision?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): I have not yet countermanded the appointment of Mr. J. R. Maxwell. I am not aware whether that appointment gave general satisfaction. I should add that Mr. Maxwell is related to one of the two members of the local Bar; and that he was informed, before his appointment was actually made, that he would be transferred to another Colony if an opportunity occurred, in accordance with the settled practice and the Colonial Regulation, which lays down that in the case of the chief judicial and chief fiscal offices in a Colony in which the Crown is responsible for the appointments local connection with the Colony, by birth, family ties, or otherwise, will be considered, generally speaking, to render a candidate ineligible. As regards the last part of the hon. Baronet's Question, I may state that no request has yet been received from any quarter as to Mr. Maxwell's continuance at the Gambia.

LAW AND POLICE—PROSECUTION EXPENSES ACT—EXPENSES OF WITNESSES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been drawn to the Report of a proceeding at the Westminster Police Court on Thursday last, when the conductor of an omnibus, who had been subpœned by the Court to attend and give evidence on a charge which was ultimately dismissed, asked for his costs, mentioning that he had lost his day's employment, and could ill afford to do so, as he was only what was called "odd man;" and Mr. Safford, the Chief Clerk, then stated, on the authority of the Clerk of the Peace, that the Treasury had intimated that they would not repay the expenses of witnesses, allowed in accordance with 29 & 30, *Vict.* c. 52, when the charge was dismissed; whether the statement of Mr. Safford was correct; and, whether, in future, the Treasury will repay such expenses when they have been allowed by the Local Authorities?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): It is the fact that the Treasury have declined to repay to the Local Authorities the expenses allowed under 29 & 30 *Vict.* c. 52, as such expenses do not fall within the terms of the Vote for the Repayment of Criminal Prosecution Expenses. There is no intention of enlarging the classes of cases the expenses of which are now repayable.

PARLIAMENTARY REGISTRATION — ASSISTANT REVISING BARRISTERS (IRELAND).

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Has the ex-Attorney General been consulted this year, or is it intended to consult him, in accordance with precedent, as to the names of the proposed Assistant Revising Barristers; is it the fact that in 1885, during a Tory Administration, all the appointments were made by 30th August (some sittings beginning as early as 4th September), while in 1886 the appointments were made even earlier by the Liberal Government; if so, what is the cause of the delay this year; and, is it intended not to announce the names until the Estimates have been passed?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): The ex-Attorney General has not been consulted, nor was his Predecessor last year by the late Administration. In 1885 most of the Revising Barristers were appointed by the 30th of August, but some at a later date. In 1885 it was important to commence the revision as soon as possible after the 1st of September, whereas now the revision cannot commence before the 8th of September. It is the fact that Revising Barristers were appointed earlier by the Earl of Aberdeen, who appointed 28 on the 2nd of August, three days before the Marquess of Londonderry was sworn in, and 11 were afterwards added. It is proposed to appoint 26, as against 39 last year. There is no such intention as suggested in the last paragraph of the Question.

MR. T. M. HEALY: In view of the important fact that the seats of many Members are dependent upon whether "True Blues" are appointed or not, I want to know whether the Government will postpone the Estimates for the salaries of these gentlemen until after we have been furnished with their names? I should not like to be kicked out of this House without——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. T. M. HEALY: Then I shall oppose these Estimates being brought on before we have the names of these gentlemen.

Subsequently,

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND) (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.) said: Perhaps it will be convenient to the hon. and learned Member for Longford if I inform him and the House that I shall be able to give tomorrow a list of names of Revising Barristers.

AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL — STUDENTS IN AGRICULTURE AT SOUTH KENSINGTON.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Vice President of the Committe of Council on Agriculture, How many students have been examined in the principles of agriculture, the amount paid to professors, and the incidental expenses in connection with the subject at South Kensington, during the seven years ending 26th May, 1887; and, whether the students who pass generally follow agriculture as a business afterwards?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): A Return shall be prepared giving the information required, except as regards the last paragraph of the Question. When nearly 5,000 students are examined annually it would be difficult to say whether they follow the business of agriculture afterwards or not; but the Return could include, if desired, the names and occupations of all those who had passed during the last year, from which it would be seen that a large proportion are already engaged in agriculture. It would be well if the hon. Member could see me as to the form of the Return.

PERU—THE PERUVIAN BONDHOLDERS.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government has been asked to give their countenance, either alone or in conjunction with France, to a Mission to Chili on behalf of the Peruvian Bondholders' Committee; and, if so, what answer has been given?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have not been asked to give their countenance to such a Mission; nor are they aware that any such is contemplated; but had the British Peruvian bondholders desired for themselves to approach the Chilian Government, Her Majesty's Government would have afforded them such support as is usually given by Her Majesty's Representatives to British subjects having well-founded claims against a Foreign Government.

MR. LABOUCHERE asked, if the right hon. Gentleman was aware of the Judgment of Sir George Jessel and Lords Justices James and Mellish in 1877, in which they stated that the Courts of this country had no jurisdiction in the matter?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, the hon. Member knew that the matter was a most complicated one, and one that had many phases. He had been asked as to a particular point, and to that he had no difficulty in giving a direct and positive answer. He, however, could not enter into a recondite history of the Peruvian bondholders.

FISHERIES—HARBOURS OF REFUGE ON THE WELSH COAST.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether, having regard to the fact that, between Holyhead and Milford Haven, there is no port or harbour of refuge into which a boat drawing eight feet six inches of water can run at all states of the tide, that the absence of such harbour accommodation seriously cripples the success of fishing and trawling on that coast, and occasions serious loss of life every year, he will appoint a Departmental Committee to visit Fishguard, Aberystwith, Aberdovey, Barmouth, St. Tudwell's, and other places, to inquire what steps could, and should, be taken for the further protection of the lives and industry of fishermen and traders along the Welsh Coast?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Her Majesty's Government have no intention of departing from the policy of successive Governments in past years, under which they have hitherto declined to make grants of public money for harbour construction except in cases of Imperial and national necessity. Under the circumstances, it would not appear that any advantage would result from the appointment of a Committee as proposed by the hon. Member. If the hon. Member's Question has reference to the grants of loans to fishing harbours through the Public Works Loan Commissioners, I would refer him to my statement on the subject in Committee of Supply and a Minute of the Treasury to the Board of Trade which I then communicated to the Committee.

FORESTRY — TRAMWAYS (IRELAND) ACT, 1883—TREE-PLANTING.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware of the failure of the tree planting clauses of "The Tramways (Ireland) Act, 1883," and, having regard to the fact and the recent Report of the Committee on Forestry, which Report recommends the planting of large areas in each of the Three Kingdoms, the Government would transfer a portion of the moneys still available for migration, under the same Act of 1883, to the development of osier growing and other forest industries in Ireland?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Act quoted by the hon. Member provides for the scheme for tree planting by way of loans. Any failure which may have occurred is not due to the loans not being available, but to applicants not coming forward. There being no failure of funds for the purpose of tree planting, the question of appropriating funds assigned to other purposes does not seem to arise.

SALMON FISHERY ACT, 1873—BOARD OF CONSERVATORS OF THE DOVEY FISHERY DISTRICT.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether the Board of Conservators of the Dovey Fishery District has ever complied with the Regulation contained in Section 30 of "The Salmon Fishery Act, 1873," that the holders of licences for fishing in common or public waters should annually elect a representative on the Board; and, if not, whether he will take steps to secure compliance with the provisions of the Act?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Board of Trade have no power to enforce the provisions of the Act in the manner referred to by the hon. Member. They will, however, communicate with the Fishery Board on the subject.

METROPOLITAN PAUPER SCHOOLS—COMPARATIVE EXPENDITURE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Why the Returns of Comparative Expenditure at the Metropolitan Pauper Schools, which up to 1882 were included in the Annual Reports of the Board, have, since that year, been discontinued; and, whether he will undertake to include these useful Returns in future Annual Reports?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The publication of these statements in the Annual Reports of the Board was discontinued with the view of diminishing the bulk of the Reports. The Board, however, furnish copies of the statements for every Manager and Guardian in the Metropolis, and are always willing, on application, to furnish a copy to anyone interested in the subject. If, however, there is any general desire that a comparative statement of the expenditure in respect of the schools in the Metropolis should in future appear in the Reports I will arrange for this.

BOARD OF TRADE — BOATING FATALITY AT ILFRACOMBE.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether it is intended to hold an inquiry respecting the capsizing of the unlicensed yacht *Monarch* on Friday last, at Ilfracombe, when 14 lives were lost, the Coroner having closed the inquiry before the relatives of the deceased could attend or be represented at the inquest?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Yes, Sir; the Board of Trade have directed an inquiry to be held into the circumstances attending the casualty to the *Monarch*.

PRISON RULES—COMMUNICATIONS TO CONVICTS.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is against Prison Rules for a convict to receive a letter from a lady District Visitor acquainting him with the death of his child; for a chaplain to inform a prisoner that a wreath should be put on his child's grave; for a convict to have a photograph of his wife and children; and, if so, whether he will have the Prison Rules altered to allow prisoners to be more readily influenced for good?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): It is not against Prison Rules for a convict to receive a letter from a lady District Visitor acquainting him with the death of his child; or for a chaplain to inform a prisoner that a wreath should be put on his child's grave. A convict would be allowed to see a photograph of his wife and children; but he would not be allowed to keep it, as no private property is allowed to be in the possession of a prisoner. I think it can be safely left to the discretion of the Governors to do what is proper and humane in connection with the family affairs of any particular convict; and I propose, during the Recess, to consider the whole question of Prison Rules.

LAW AND POLICE—SOLICITATION IN THE STREETS.

MR. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the present inequality of the law regarding solicitation in the streets, the Government will take steps next Session to alter the law so as to secure persons of both sexes alike from serious annoyance in the streets, and to make offenders of either sex equally liable to punishment?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I will undertake to consider carefully before next Session what amendments of the law are desirable on the subject referred to, which, as the hon. Member knows, is one of considerable difficulty.

AFRICA (SOUTH) — A RAILWAY THROUGH SWAZILAND.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention had been called to an article in *The Financial News* of the 31st of August, in which it was stated that he (Sir Henry Holland) had been approached by the concessionnaires of a scheme for a railway through Swaziland, and involving the creation of a free port at Coosa Bay, and that he had said that he had no objection to the scheme, and whether there was any truth in the report?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): My attention has been called to the article referred to. The statement is quite incorrect. I have not been approached by the concessionnaires of the alleged scheme, nor have I had any such scheme brought under my notice. I need hardly add, therefore, that I have expressed no approval of it.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it was his intention to report Progress in Supply at an early hour that evening in order to proceed with the Allotments Bill?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, that looking at the condition of Supply, he was not in a position to ask the House to report Progress at an early hour; and therefore, unless they got through the Irish Estimates before half-past 1 o'clock, the Allotments Bill would not be proceeded with that evening.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked, what day the Bill would be taken if they did not reach it that night? At this time of the Session it would be most inconvenient if they did not know when the Bill would be taken.

MR. W. H. SMITH greatly regretted the inconvenience to which hon. Members were put in consequence of the postponement of the Bill; but the hon. Gentleman would see that it was very difficult to fix a day. He would, however, give the earliest possible Notice as to when the Bill would be proceeded with. They must get Supply, and the Report stage of the Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Bill must be taken this week—he hoped on Saturday.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): In case the Allotments Bill is not taken to-night, will it be taken to-morrow?

MR. W. H. SMITH: If the Irish Estimates are disposed of to-morrow night we will take it then.

MR. CHANNING asked, whether the Allotments Bill could not be taken at any time of the night? Members on the Opposition side of the House were perfectly ready to deal with it at any hour.

Subsequently,

MR. W. H. SMITH said, with regard to the answer he had given a few minutes ago, he desired to state that while he did not wish the House to remain sitting till a very late hour owing to the strain put upon Members, it had been represented to him that the Bill would not take a very long time, and in that case he would not object to its being taken at half-past 1 in the morning. But it must be obvious that it would be impossible to enter on a prolonged debate after that hour; and therefore he should leave it to the good feeling of hon. Members to say whether the Bill should be taken at the close of the Sitting or not.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central) said, he had some important Amendments on the Paper, and he would not wish that they should come on at 3 o'clock in the morning. He would prefer that the right hon. Gentleman should say something definite.

COLONEL NOLAN announced that as the Bill had been altered by leaving out Ireland, he should move that it be postponed until Ireland was included in the measure.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, under those circumstances, the Bill would not be taken that night.

In reply to Mr. WALLACE (Edinburgh, E.),

MR. W. H. SMITH said, that the Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill would not be taken to-night.

THE MAGISTRACY (ENGLAND AND WALES)—DARTMOUTH MAGISTRATES.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to a matter to which he had twice called his attention, Whether the Lord Chancellor had arrived at a decision with regard to certain Dartmouth magistrates, who, from a recent trial, appeared to have been guilty of gross misconduct on the public road?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he had no information on the subject more than he had given the hon. Member before.

MR. CLANCY said, that the right hon. Gentleman had given him no information.

COURSE OF BUSINESS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) submitted with regard to the Bills on the Paper, that the proper course for the Government to take would be at the conclusion of their own Business to move the adjournment of the House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he would consider the suggestion; but no disputed Business would be taken after the third Government Order.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) suggested, with a view to complete the discussion on the Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Bill on Saturday, that the Rule with regard to Wednesday Sittings should not be applied to that day.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he believed it was the general wish of the House that the Wednesday Rule should be adhered to. From what he had ascertained from Gentlemen on both sides, he believed there was no doubt that the discussion on the Bill would be completed before 6 o'clock on Saturday.

MOTIONS.

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PARLIAMENT—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE (1882)—RULE 2 (ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE).

THE PROCLAIMED MEETING AT BALLYCOREE, ENNIS, CO. CLARE.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can give us any information on two matters of great importance in Ireland. First, I want to ask him on what grounds the Government have prohibited the meeting announced to be held near the town of Ennis next Sunday, and also if he will state at the same time whether the prohibition will bring the meeting under the definition of an unlawful assembly dealt with under Clause 2 of the Crimes Act; and also I wish to ask how it is, in spite of repeated assurances given by him in this House, evictions are still being carried out on the property of The O'Grady at Herbertstown, county Limerick, of tenants under £100 a-year rent?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, N.E.): As the hon. Gentleman is aware, what I have said in the House with regard to evictions does not depend upon any assurances of mine, but upon what the law is, and upon that point the hon. Gentleman is probably as good a judge as I am. I apprehend the law to be exactly as I have previously stated—at present there can be no legal evictions in Ireland——

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Why do you supply police, then?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of tenants under £100 a-year, and therefore every eviction in Ireland must be either upon title or where the rent is over £100. That I believe to be the law.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman has not taken the least notice of the first Question as to a meeting proposed to be held at Ennis, in County Clare, being proclaimed, and whether such Proclamation of the meeting will bring it under the definition of an unlawful assembly under Clause 2 of the Crimes Act?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir; I believe not. If the hon. Gentleman would address that Question to the right hon. and learned Gentleman near me, perhaps he would get a fuller answer.

MR. DILLON: Perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman will inform me?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): I think it has been often explained that the action of the Executive in proclaiming any assembly is only a measure of a precautionary character, and does not make an innocent assembly an unlawful one. There is no additional efficacy given to the Proclamation of a meeting by the recent Act of Parliament passed that Session. That Act, under Section 2, deals with cases of riot and unlawful assembly. The Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant does not constitute an innocent assembly an unlawful assembly, but it is a warning that, in the opinion of the Executive, the assembly was an unlawful one, and, of course, law-abiding citizens would naturally pay attention to the admonition.

MR. DILLON: In consequence of the answers I have received I feel compelled to ask the permission of the

House to move the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—namely, the conduct of the Executive Government in Ireland in proclaiming the meeting announced to be held in Ennis, County Clare, next Sunday, and also in sanctioning the carrying out of evictions on the old system of tenants paying under £100 rent.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is mixing up two subjects. He is proposing to deal with two subjects instead of one.

MR. DILLON: Under these circumstances, I shall be compelled to confine myself to the first matter—namely, the conduct of the Executive Government in proclaiming the meeting announced to be held at Ennis on Sunday next.

The pleasure of the House not having been signified,

MR. SPEAKER called on those Members who supported the Motion to rise in their places, and not less than 40 Members having accordingly risen,

MR. DILLON said: The practice which has long been in abeyance of proclaiming public meetings in Ireland without the slightest reason appears to be revived. I would ask the attention of the House to the fact that when I addressed two Questions just now, one to the Head of the Executive Government in Ireland, and the other to the Chief Law Officer of the Crown in Ireland, that neither of them deigned to give me even a reply to my Question as to what were the grounds on which this meeting was proclaimed. I twice put the Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland as to the grounds of the Proclamation, and he did not deign to pay me the compliment of an answer.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I was communicating with my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General at the time; and I forgot to answer that Question, which was one among others addressed to me by the hon. Member. I meant no discourtesy, and I am perfectly ready to answer it.

MR. DILLON: In any case the discussion might have had to take place. It would have been more prudent, however, for the right hon. Gentlman to answer the Question. It was the very first Question I put, and I repeated it twice over. This forms a very good case on which to debate the principle of suppressing public meetings in Ireland. Now, Sir, what are the facts in connection with this public meeting? This meeting is a meeting called on long notice. It is a meeting which was announced to take place on last Sunday, and which was announced publicly in the newspapers for three weeks before last Sunday. I believe it is a meeting called, as I shall presently show, for two purposes—one to meet the Representatives of the County and myself, and the other to pass resolutions of thanks to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) and the English democracy for the support and sympathy they have given our country, and also for the purpose of condemning the Crimes Act. These were the purposes of the meeting—no other purpose was stated for the meeting, and no other purpose existed for the meeting. Let me point out this fact—that the meeting was announced to be held not in the immediate vicinity of any estates on which disturbance exists, though I do not for a moment admit that the Government would have a right to prohibit meetings in such a case; but this meeting was announced to be held in the immediate vicinity of the town of Ennis, a district where there has been no disturbance for a long time. In order to understand the full meaning of this action of the Irish Executive it is necessary to keep in mind this fact—that in the whole course of the movement which has existed in Ireland now for upwards of seven years, during which there have been, I suppose, 10,000 meetings, there has not been a single case of disturbance or injury to property or person springing from any one of these meetings, except where the police interfered and tried to disperse them. I point to that with special pride, for I do not know any country in the world which has such a record. I have got a copy of the only placard issued in connection with the meeting, and it is to the following effect:—

> "The people of Clare are summoned to assemble on the Hill of Ballycoree, within a mile of Ennis, on the 28th of August."

That was the date originally fixed for the meeting, but the meeting of last Sunday was not proclaimed—it was postponed at my request. The Government, having had three weeks' notice, did not proclaim the meeting last Sunday.

> "This meeting is to be attended by Mr. William O'Brien, M.P.; Mr. John Dillon, M.P.; Hon. Philip Stanhope, M.P.; and Dr. Cox, M.P. Resolutions will be proposed asserting the inalienable right of the Irish people to the making of their own laws, pledging renewed fealty to and confidence in Charles Stewart Parnell, thanking Mr. Gladstone for his message of peace to Ireland delivered in Parliament, and the democracies of England, Scotland, and Wales for their noble and truly patriotic efforts to bring about a real and lasting union between the Irish and the English people; and condemning the wantonly exasperating policy of the present Government towards the people of Ireland."

Then there is a short call to the men of Clare to prove themselves worthy of their historic county and "God Save Ireland" at the bottom of the placard. I do not see anything except it be the "God Save Ireland" which the Government could put forward as a justification for the Proclamation. On what grounds have the Government proclaimed the meeting? It seems to me, Sir, that as they have proclaimed that meeting called by such a placard, and held in a district remote from the centre of disturbance, that we are entitled to expect that as soon as Parliament rises and criticism is removed from their action that they will absolutely prevent all right of public meeting in Ireland except the meetings of the Orangemen. What is the information they have received? The Government as long as they acted on the information of their own officials took no steps to proclaim this meeting, but the magistrates and landlords of the County Clare met last week and sent to Dublin an urgent appeal to have the meeting proclaimed. But when was there ever a Land League meeting held which the local magistrate did not ask to have proclaimed? Have we not got the testimony of Lord Spencer and Sir George Trevelyan as to the tremendous pressure which was brought to bear upon them to put down meetings of Nationalists in every part of Ireland, and we have their testimony to the fact that one of the difficulties they had to deal with in carrying on the government of Ireland under the Crimes Act was this persistent and determined pressure on the part of the landlord and Tory faction to get them to prevent any Nationalist meeting from being held in any part of the country. This was a doctrine openly and positively laid down by the faction, and especially by the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman), that it was the duty of the Executive to prohibit Nationalist meetings everywhere throughout the country, because they were treasonable and rebellious, and because sedition was spouted there. As I was pointing out, all the facts go to show that the action of proclaiming the Clare meeting was taken at the dictation of the local magistrates, the agents and the landlords of the County Clare. Are we to understand that wherever the magistrates of an Irish county assemble and swear information or send up petitions to the Castle, that meetings will be proclaimed? The object of this Proclamation is simply this—that Colonel Vandeleur and Mr. Burton, and other Clare landlords, are preparing to evict on an enormous scale. Colonel Vandeleur is going to evict 60, and Mr. Burton 20 tenants, who are rack-rented up to the hilt, and who, if they could go into Court, would get greater reductions than we ask for, and these landlords, terrified by the result of the enormous quantity of public opinion we brought to bear on Colonel O'Callaghan, are shaking in their shoes lest they should be held up to the public odium of England as Colonel O'Callaghan was. They do not care for the odium of the Irish Nationalists, but they want to prevent the public opinion of England from being fixed on the iniquities they are about to perpetrate. What is it that makes me consider this worth taking up the time of the House about?—for I do consider it to be as important a subject as could possibly be brought under the attention of the House for two reasons—because, not content with enforcing your Coercion Act, you are going also to deny to the people of Ireland the right of public meeting, no matter how peaceable a district may be. If the Government are going by means of the powers they possess under the Coercion Act, to deny the people of Ireland the right of public meeting for peaceable purposes, that will be a scandal that I believe the people of this country will not tolerate. The people of the County of Clare will not be put down. We shall hold our meeting next Sunday whether it be proclaimed or not; and we shall challenge the opinion given by the Attorney General for Ireland as to its lawfulness. I say it is not unlawful. Those who are seeking to put down this meeting are doing a most dangerous and deadly act against the public peace in Ireland; and those who would attempt, by means of their bludgeons and bayonets and buckshot in the hands of men under the command of ruffianly inspectors, instructed by secret telegrams like Captain Plunkett's, not to hesitate to "shoot down the people if necessary," would have the blood of the people upon their heads. Very little would induce Captain Plunkett to think it necessary. What was the action of Captain Plunkett the othey day as reported in *The Times* of this morning? Why, two or three women were standing outside a house, when they saw Captain Plunkett coming along the road. They called him a hangman, and he turned on them and said—"If you say that again I will send the police in amongst you." That is the kind of man who in all probability you will have in command next Sunday. I say we will bring the peasantry of Clare into Ennis. We are standing on our rights, and if, when the people enter Ennis on Sunday they are met by some 500 or 600 armed men with loaded guns, there is bloodshed, it will be upon the head of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who is breaking the law in prohibiting a political meeting and is allowing himself to be made the tool of exterminating and rack-renting and ruffianly landlords of Clare, who dread the public opinion of this country, and know that their action towards their tenants had best be done in the dark. Why, if, as they are proud of boasting, they are not ashamed of these evictions, why are they afraid of our going to Clare and bringing an English Member of Parliament with us? They want bloodshed. They have tried peace for six months, have found the people too strong, and what they want to do is to get back to the old and evil days, and, by creating riots and disturbances, be allowed to let Plunkett and his bludgeon men loose on the people. I look forward to this kind of thing with the greatest possible anxiety and alarm; but it is absurd to suppose—and I do not think the Chief Secretary even can suppose that, even if we were cowardly and base enough to do as the London *Times*, with its manly sneer, thinks we would, to run away, we could not do it. *The Times*, that great advocate of law and order, says that "Mr. Dillon and Mr. O'Brien are skilled in the art of running away from a policeman." I would like to see the editor of the London *Times* with his head batoned by a constable, and without any means of resistance. I promise him he would run faster than I would. But whether we are inclined to run away or not, one thing is perfectly certain—we are not in a position to do it. It very often happens that when a man is inclined to show the white feather he finds it far more difficult to do that than to face the danger. I am bound to say that I would not be the least ashamed to run away from a policeman, though I never did so in my life. But if a man with no weapon in his hands is attacked by 20 or 30 men who have weapons, I do not think the man need be the least ashamed to run away. I have seen very brave men run away in such circumstances, who, if they had weapons, would have made short work of their assailants; but, what we cannot run away from even if we wanted, is the public opinion of England and of Ireland. Let the Government be under no mistake in this matter; the meeting at Ennis next Sunday must take place, and it will be continued until it is dispersed by the bludgeons and the bayonets and the buckshot of the armed force sent to put it down. I call upon the head of the Irish Executive to justify himself in face of this country if he can for what he is going to do in Ennis next Sunday, and if he has not got very much stronger grounds to go upon than anything he has been able to put forward for some time past, the people of this country will teach him and his Government that there is a length in Ireland to which he cannot go in dealing with the people. In order to afford the right hon. Gentleman an opportunity of justifying his action, I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Dillon.*)

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Gentleman the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) might have had the chief portion of the information I shall now give him of the grounds upon which the meeting at

Ennis was proclaimed had I not inadvertently omitted to reply to one part of his question. I the more greatly regret that inadvertence on my part, because it has afforded the hon. Member an opportunity of delivering a speech which, however innocent it may be in this House, will, I am afraid, have an evil effect upon people on the other side of the Irish Channel. The hon. Gentleman asks me on what ground we have proclaimed this meeting, and he has read out a placard as proof and testimony that the objects of the meeting are purely political, and that it ought, therefore, not to be interfered with by the Executive. In dealing with this matter, the Executive have to consider two questions—first, what are the real objects of the meeting; and secondly, what are likely to be its results. I am not at all prepared to deny that the objects of this meeting, as appearing from the placard read out by the hon. Member, are entirely and purely of a political character, and that if the meeting had no other object, and was likely to lead to no more serious consequences than an ordinary political meeting held in the Rotunda in Dublin or held in this country, the Irish Executive would have had no right to interfere at all. But I would remind the hon. Gentleman that those who have called meetings in disturbed districts in Ireland have never found any difficulty whatever in showing that the avowed objects of those meetings were of the most innocent political description. The principles that we have adopted in proclaiming the meeting are identical with those that were adopted by Lord Spencer, and carried out year after year by the late Liberal Government. Looking over the list of meetings which Lord Spencer found it his duty to proclaim, I could find several in the very county with which we are now dealing. In Clare Lord Spencer prohibited a meeting at Feakle, as there were very serious disturbances in the immediate neighbourhood. He proclaimed an endless number of meetings altogether. He proclaimed one at this very place—at Ennis. The meeting was one convened by public placard for the purpose of the hon. Gentleman who is now the Member for Mid-Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenny) addressing his constituents, and that hon. Gentleman, it was announced, would be accompanied on the platform by Mr. O'Brien, M.P., Mr. Biggar, M.P., and other gentlemen, who would address the meeting. Is there anything more innocent than a Gentleman going down to address his constituents? And yet Lord Spencer, on the ground, and the sole ground, that Clare at that time was in a disturbed state, thought it was his duty—and I believe it was his duty—to prevent that meeting taking place. I could multiply such instances times without end; but there is no doubt about the precedent of Lord Spencer. The right hon. Baronet to whom allusion has been made to-night, who is now the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), and was at the time of which I am speaking Chief Secretary for Ireland, told us that in his opinion the National League was a purely political organization, and as such ought to be spared; but I observe the Government of which that right hon. Gentleman was the chief responsible officer in this House proclaimed a meeting in County Cork which was avowedly called for no other purpose whatever than that of establishing a branch of the National League. In other words, he proclaimed a meeting which had for its object the purely political one of establishing a branch of what he regarded as a purely political organization. [An hon. MEMBER: When and where was that?] At Castle Lyon, County Cork, 23rd October, 1883. I am not going to labour this point in reference to the proceedings of Lord Spencer or the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division, because precedents abound. There is no question whatever that Lord Spencer invariably considered it to be his duty, and one of the functions of a responsible Government, to proclaim, and, in so far as he could, to stop, any public meeting whatever where its avowed objects, however innocent, or purely political, providing he thought such a meeting would lead to a disturbance of the public peace. But this is not the question. Where, I ask, is this meeting going to be held? The hon. Member for East Mayo said it was going to be held in a peaceful part of the country.

MR. DILLON: What I said was that it was going to be held in Ennis, away from the centre of disturbance.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This meeting is to be held in the very centre of what is by far the most disturbed, disorganized county in the whole of Ireland at this present moment. If any gentleman chooses to consult the statistics of crime in Ireland, he will find that the County of Clare stands on the unenviable pinnacle of having produced out of all proportion the largest number of grave agrarian crimes; and not only so, but that Clare is undoubtedly a county in which the system of intimidation, for which we, on this side of the House, think the National League is chiefly responsible, prevails in its most aggravated form absolutely unchecked. Now, Sir, the hon. Gentleman has told us that meetings in Ireland—at any rate more in Ireland than anywhere else—are innocent, as they are a peaceful people. The hon. Gentleman really misapprehends the whole purport and meaning of Proclamations of this kind. I do not doubt the least in the world that a great majority of the meetings in Ireland are peaceful meetings. Wherever the mass of the population is in favour of a meeting there is no reason why that meeting should not be peaceful, whatever the doctrines proclaimed at it, whatever result in the form of outrage might ultimately spring from it. The evil of these meetings does not exist, as the hon. Gentleman appears to think, judging by his speech, in any disturbance of the public peace which occurs at the meeting; the evil of these meetings arises entirely from the consequences they produce in the district where they are held—the disturbance of the public peace, the crime, the outrages and the acts of intimidation which, unhappily, too often flow from them. The hon. Gentleman has told us that the Executive Government has been moved in this matter simply by the pressure which has been brought to bear upon them by rack-renting landlords in the County of Clare. On what ground does the hon. Gentleman make that accusation against the Government? The hon. Member in the speech which he has just delivered has spoken of several matters which are within his own personal knowledge, and on which his statements and opinions are entitled to consideration and respect by the House; but when the hon. Member describes the motives which have actuated Her Majesty's Government; when he tells us what kind of letters we have received, and what kind of effect those letters have produced in our minds, it is manifest from the nature of the case that he speaks without authority, and purely from conjecture, upon a subject upon which he can have no direct knowledge whatever. Sir, I directly traverse and contradict the statements of the hon. Gentleman in that respect. So far as I know, at all events, no letter has come from any Clare landlord.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Oh, no.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I gave my sanction, and am responsible for this meeting being proclaimed. Among the documents brought before to my notice when I gave that decision there was—so far as I am aware—no letter from any Clare landlord; and certainly if there was one, which there was not, I was not influenced by it. I was influenced, as every man in my position would be, by information and opinions given me by those responsible for the public peace on the spot. Their clear conviction and opinion was that the meeting to be held was one which would lead to a disturbance of the public peace and to crime and outrage, and, that being their opinion, I was not going to take upon myself the responsibility of saying that with my goodwill the meeting should go on. The hon. Gentleman has told us that, whether we proclaim this meeting or not, the meeting will be held; and he has said that if, in consequence of holding that meeting in defiance of the Proclamation, bloodshed should ensue, that bloodshed will rest on the head of the Government. [An hon. Member: On yours.] Yes, I think he singled me out especially. But I can assure the hon. Member that responsibility is not to be fixed on one person or another merely on the fiat of the hon. Member. I venture to tell him that the responsibility for the evils that may—and very likely will—ensue, if in defiance of the Proclamation this meeting is held, will rest, and must rest, on the head of those who insist upon holding this meeting in defiance of the Proclamation. It will rest upon those leaders of the Irish people on whom already rests the great weight of responsibilities in these matters; and if the hon. Gentleman thinks that he can acquit himself and absolve his Friends from their share in the responsibility by pointing over to us and saying, "Upon your head will rest that responsibility," I tell him that that will not be the verdict of the English people, and it will not be the verdict of this House. The hon. Member (Mr. Dillon) has told us he was driven to take the course he had in regard to this meeting by the force of popular opinion behind him.

MR. DILLON: I did not say that at all. I said that if I felt any inclination to play the coward I dare not do it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It appears to me that the hon. Gentleman has emphasized the sentiment I had watered down when trying to repeat it. What he did say is that if he wished to run away he would be afraid to do so. Well, Sir, that means, and can only mean, that whatever his conscience may say, he is driven on by a force over which he has no control. [MR. DILLON: Absurd!] I venture to dispute that proposition. I believe if you would let alone this unhappy peasantry—if you did not use that influence which your position and your abilities give you, there would be no difficulty whatever in inducing them to be the law-abiding members of a law-abiding community which I hope in the near future we shall see them to be. But, Sir, I do not know that I need say anything further upon this question. [*Interruption from the Irish Members.*]

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) not to interrupt so constantly.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I again give the House the assurance which I have given them before with regard to this meeting and with regard to every such meeting which it may the duty of the Executive in Ireland to proclaim. We shall not be influenced under any circumstances by political considerations. We shall in no degree be influenced towards proclaiming a meeting by the political objects which may be announced or the topics to be dealt with at that meeting; we shall be influenced by the consideration which must always be present to our minds, that on us rests the responsibility, in as far as we can, of preserving law and order in Ireland, and that we are bound to suppress all meetings which, in our judgment, exercised to the best of our ability, may conduce to disorder, to outrage, or to intimidation.

MR. P. STANHOPE (Wednesbury) said, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) seemed to imagine that he alone had authority to speak in the name of the English people; but he ventured to say that the English people, aye, and those who elected him at Manchester, if called upon to decide on this question as to whether the right of free speech was to be abolished, would restore the right hon. Gentleman to the management of his rack-rented estates in Scotland and deprive that House—if it could be called a deprivation—of the presence of the modern Stafford. The right hon. Gentleman had said to the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) "Let alone the unhappy peasantry of Ireland." Why, for 700 years that had been the cry of the Predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman. For 700 years they had been let alone to be starved and evicted, and now, because Englishmen were happily alive to the miseries the Irish peasantry had endured and had made the Irish cause their own, the right hon. Gentleman said they were defying the law—the law which the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends had made in opposition to the wishes of the great majority of the English people—because they refused to be intimidated into silence or suppressed at the order of the Irish Executive. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Government had not in that matter been inspired by the landlords of Clare. He (Mr. P. Stanhope) would ask, had it not been inspired in that matter by Captain Plunkett? Was not Captain Plunkett the agent of the landlords?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension. Captain Plunkett has nothing to do with the district in question.

MR. P. STANHOPE said, he had, perhaps, mistaken the name of the Resident Magistrate who inspired the right hon. Gentleman, but, whoever the Resident Magistrate might be, he, in any case, must be by the very circumstances of his arbitrary position a friend and a representative of the landlord class. He hunted and shot with the landlords, and reserved another kind of shooting for the tenantry. Well, this meeting in question was called for objects which were purely political. He admitted, however, that one of those objects was unpatriotic and unconstitutional in the eyes of the Government. That object was to express a vote of thanks to Mr. Gladstone for his message of peace to Ireland. He could understand that must strike the lackadaisical and whimsical mind of the right hon. Gentleman who now held the reins of power in Ireland as being a monstrous proposition.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must caution the hon. Member against using language which is not Parliamentary nor commonly courteous. If the hon. Member repeats that language I shall name him to the House.

Mr. P. STANHOPE: I bow, Sir, to your decision. If, under the impulse of a very strong feeling with regard to the Executive in Ireland I used an expression which I cannot believe will be condemned by the majority of the English people——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must ask the hon. Member not to defend language which, from the Chair, I have emphatically condemned.

Mr. P. STANHOPE, resuming, said, then he had this to say, that his contention was that the meeting in question was called for purely Constitutional objects. It was not called to excite or encourage ill-feeling or any irritation which might unfortunately exist among the peasantry in Ireland; but it was called for the purpose of saying to them words of peace and goodwill, and of telling them—as he (Mr. P. Stanhope) on the part of his constituents now told them—that they were not alone in this fight, but that they had the English people behind them, and that while there was no doubt that the majority seated on the Ministerial Benches were willing to follow the Government in whatever courses they might desire to pursue, yet that there was flowing now throughout the constituencies of England a tide which was rising—a tide which would sweep away that Act under which the right hon. Gentleman had suppressed this meeting, which would restore to the people of Ireland the right of free speech, and some [illegible]nce of liberty, and which, in doin[illegible] [illegible]ould also remove a Government [illegible] would venture to call both arbitrary and incompetent from the Treasury Bench.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid) said, he was astounded with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman proceeded to justify his action by referring to the precedents set by Lord Spencer, and in particular to a meeting of his (Mr. M. J. Kenny's) constituents which was proclaimed several years ago. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman that Lord Spencer subsequently recognized his mistake, and that a short time afterwards the meeting was held, and in no way molested. What he objected to in regard to the Proclamation of the meeting at Ballycoree was that whereas Lord Spencer proceeded under specific sections of the Crimes Act of 1882, the present Government had taken no such powers. They went upon what they said was the Common Law—though, in his belief it was not the Common Law—and they proclaimed a meeting which, in his opinion, they had no power whatever to proclaim. The Proclamation was absolutely valueless, and every bayonet used and every charge of buckshot fired into the people would be a crime, and if the lives of the people were taken the responsibility would rest on those who had suppressed the meeting. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had stated he had got no representation from the landlords of Clare. Now, it was a matter of notoriety that a meeting of Clare landlords was held—the report appeared in the Press—and at that meeting a resolution was adopted calling on the Government to proclaim the Ballycoree demonstration, and a copy of it sent to the Castle. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary said he had not seen that representation; but he (Mr. M. J. Kenny) would like to know whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Lord Ashbourne) had not seen it, and whether really it was not in consequence of that representation that the Castle Authorities took action and declared the meeting illegal. The meeting had been proclaimed, in the first place, not because of the presence of Irish Members, but for the purpose of preventing English Members of Parliament from speaking to the people of Ireland. It was a very easy thing to send Irish Members to the plank bed. That was done before, and would be done again; but it was a totally different thing to send an English Member to prison. He should like to see the Bench of Magistrates, men in Ireland, who would venture to send an English Member to prison. They dare not do it; and it was for the purpose of preventing English Members from going across to Ireland and exemplifying by their presence the union between the peoples of England and Ireland, and of preventing a vote of thanks being passed to Mr. Gladstone, that the arbitrary step of proclaiming the meeting was taken by the Government. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had said the meeting was to be held in the centre of a disturbed estate; but he (Mr. M. J. Kenny) challenged the Government to prove that following any meeting in Clare there had been an outbreak of crime. It was meetings of this kind held throughout Ireland for the past seven years that had changed the country from a country abounding in agrarian crime to a country in which agrarian crime did not exist, and it was only in districts in which meetings had been proclaimed that disturbances arose. In the second place, it had been proclaimed for the purpose of giving facilities to certain landlords in the district to evict their tenants. It was in order to enable the rack-renting landlords to proceed to the full extent in evicting their tenants that that meeting had been proclaimed. He concurred in the declaration of his hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) that he did not intend to yield to that Proclamation. The result of the Proclamation—if it were persisted in—would be that instead of only one meeting there would be more than one held on the hill of Ballycoree. The Government would not succeed in putting down those meetings. The Irish Members did not care a pin for the Proclamations of the Government. In one respect they were valueless, and could easily be avoided; but by this debate they wanted to show the people of England that the Government were acting illegally, and that it was through no fault of the Government that free speech was not entirely suppressed in Ireland.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said, he thought that the House and the country owed a great debt of gratitude to the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) for bringing that matter forward, because they had an opportunity of learning what the doctrine of the Chief Secretary was in regard to proclaiming meetings. The right hon. Gentlemen fully admitted that the meeting was essentially a political one, so far as the object stated in the placard went, and also that there was not likely to be any disturbance at the meeting itself.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What I said was that Irish meetings are usually peaceable.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman did not affirm that the meeting would be in any way a disorderly meeting, provided that the police did not interfere. In fact, he seemed to intimate that one of the grounds for proclaiming it was that the district was so exceedingly Nationalist, the people being all of one mind—and it takes two to make a quarrel—that there was not likely to be any disturbance. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] That was the effect of what he had said. But the right hon. Gentleman alleged that meetings in disturbed districts might incite the people to outrage, crime, and intimidation, not at the meetings but subsequently, on account of what the speakers had said. But how could the right hon. Gentleman know what was to be said at that meeting? He was bound to accept the statement of the conveners of the meeting that they would meet to pass a vote of thanks to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) to express confidence in the hon. Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell), and to ask God to protect Ireland. Were these propositions likely to lead to intimidation and outrage? But the right hon. Gentleman says there have been outrages in that part of Ireland. His (Mr. Labouchere's) hon. Friends denied that, and said there were these landlords who had been rack-renting and evicting, and who intended to evict. Now it appeared to him that all the landlords of any part of Ireland had to do was to rack-rent and evict to produce a feeling of discontent, in order that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary might be able to say to the people in consequence of that ill-feeling, "I shall deprive you of your political rights;" for, be it remembered that the right hon. Gentleman had acknowledged that this was a political meeting. The right hon. Gentleman said he could not conceive how anybody would suppose that the landlords of that part of Ireland had influenced him to proclaim the meeting. Then why did not the right hon. Gentleman proclaim the meeting last Sunday? It was a mere accident that the meeting was adjourned to next Sunday; so what were the grounds which influenced him to proclaim it for next Sunday when he had not thought fit to proclaim it for the Sunday before? Had the right hon. Gentleman been induced to change his mind in the interval by the advice of the Resident Magistrates or other Magistrates of the district? Let the right hon. Gentleman fairly tell them who had advised him that the meeting would lead to outrages and intimidations; whether it was the landlords, or whether it was not. He understood that the landlords had met and passed resolutions against the holding of this meeting—[Mr. M. J. KENNY: They sent them to the Castle]—and that a representative was positively sent to the Castle. It could only be supposed that it was at the bidding and dictation of the landlords that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary proclaimed that meeting. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of Lord Spencer having proclaimed meetings; but there was this difference between the two cases, that Lord Spencer had, under the Crimes Act, a special responsibility thrown upon him to prevent those meetings if he thought it necessary; whereas there was no such obligation thrown on the right hon. Gentleman, who did not proceed under the Crimes Act, but acted under the same Common Law of England and Ireland. Whenever the conduct of Members of the present Irish Executive was impugned they always slunk away under the shadow of Lord Shakespeare—[*laughter*]—he meant Lord Spencer—who had admitted that the previous Crimes Act was a mistake, and said he would not support another. Lord Spencer found that the system of coercion had failed, and he would put it to the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, whether it was not unfair to attempt to shelter himself under the plea that Lord Spencer some years ago had done the same, when that noble Lord admitted that it was a mistake which he would never repeat again if he were in the same position? He held with the hon. Member for East Mayo that the people of Ireland would utterly despise the warnings of the right hon. Gentleman. What would happen if the people went to that meeting, and there was no quarrel among them, they being all of one mind except the police and the military? Were the police and the military to be sent there simply to excite disorder by attacking the people? If the police and the military kept away there was not the slightest probability of any disturbance. That Proclamation appeared to be a species of political manifesto on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. A political meeting was called to express confidence in the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary issued a Proclamation urging all law-abiding persons not to go to the meeting. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), if he thought anybody would follow it, would issue the same sort of Proclamation in England. He trusted that the Irish people would go to that meeting, and that the English people would realize and understand that what the right hon. Gentleman confessed was a political meeting, was attempted to be stopped by the Executive for political purposes and for nothing else.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton) said, that the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) was altogether in error in saying that his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) stated that that meeting was to be held for political purposes. His right hon. Friend had made no such statement. If all that was required to take any dangerous meeting whatever in Ireland out of the prohibition of the law was that its promoters should only profess to have some political object the law would be paralyzed. There could be no doubt that Lord Spencer when he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland endeavoured to stop certain meetings in Ireland—having proclaimed 55 in all—and up to the time when that noble Lord left that country nobody had heard a word suggesting that he was dissatisfied with the result of his Proclamations. [An hon. MEMBER: He said he was.] The hon. Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenny) had observed in the course of his speech that the meeting called for Sunday next would have the effect of preventing crime—[Mr. M. J. KENNY: Hear, hear!]—but the fact was, statistics showed that a great number of agrarian crimes had occurred in the districts where the public meetings had been held. [An Irish MEMBER: Give the statistics.] He was not going into the question of statistics on that occasion. Now, the ground upon which the Government had proclaimed the meeting as an illegal one was this. They had proclaimed the meeting, not under Statute, but under the Common Law, as he had stated in reply to a Question from the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon). The Common Law enabled the Government—a responsible Government—to declare that it would suppress and prevent the holding of an assembly, which it regarded, upon the evidence before it, as calculated to cause public disorder, or to be called for a legally improper purpose.

MR. DILLON: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman say whether this Proclamation is under the same Common Law as exists in England?

MR. GIBSON: It is under the Common Law of the land, and so far as I know it is the same. It was impossible to say beforehand, from the mere statements of the placards, what the actual circumstances of the meeting would be, or what would be the danger of the meeting. In England or Scotland meetings might be held with perfect safety, and he should not be uneasy at English Members going over and rousing any amount of popular enthusiasm in Ireland; but the view which the Government took was that Ennis was a disturbed district. There was no doubt that many references would be made at this meeting next Sunday to the action of the Government in proclaiming the League. Having regard to the state of the country there could be little doubt that the result would be violation of the law, possibly actually at the meeting; and the persons who incited disobedience to the police at this meeting would themselves be liable, as hon. Gentlemen knew, to be proceeded against. Speeches would probably be made at this meeting inciting the people wholly to disregard and disobey the Act of Parliament; and responsible officials on the spot had formed the opinion that it would be dangerous to the public peace if this meeting was held. That justified the action which the Executive had taken; and a serious responsibility would rest on responsible politicians who, instead of challenging the policy of the Executive, insisted upon setting their private judgment against the decision of the Executive and trying to force the people of the country into a conflict with the officers of the law. That was a terrible responsibility for hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. He would caution them, and he would ask those of them whom he knew were interested in the fortunes of the Irish people not, by their example and language in that House, to try and force the people of the country into such a disastrous conflict. The Government in this Proclamation had declared on sworn information that this meeting is to be proclaimed and not allowed to be held.

MR. DILLON: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman read out the terms of the sworn information?

MR. GIBSON: Certainly not.

MR. E. ROBERTSON: Read the Proclamation, then.

MR. GIBSON said, the terms of the Proclamation were—

> "Now, we, the Lord Lieutenant and General Governor of Ireland, do hereby prohibit such meeting, and do strictly caution and forewarn all persons whomsoever that they do abstain from taking part in, or encouraging, or inciting to the same; and we hereby give notice that if in defiance of this, our Proclamation, any such meeting at Ballycoree or its neighbourhood shall be attempted or take place the same will be prevented, and all persons attempting to take part in or encouraging the same or inciting thereto will be proceeded against according to law."

That was the solemn Proclamation put forward by the Executive Government. Responsible politicians might challenge the policy and the authority of the Executive in doing this; but as far as his memory went back he could not recall an instance of any responsible politician in that House inciting the people of the country to violate the Proclamation and insisting upon holding a meeting which the Executive had declared to be illegal.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) said, he had hoped before the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland sat down that he would have set at rest one point which had been urged by more than one previous speaker. The Irish Members had specifically pressed about 10 times for an answer to a plain question; and if the Government found fault with his hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) for making a Motion of this kind, he must point out that it could be easily avoided by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary giving straightforward answers. He thought the country would judge on whose shoulders the responsibility for wasting the time of the House rested. They had asked why, if this meeting was illegal next Sunday, it was not illegal if it had been held last Sunday? Were the Government going to give an answer to that question?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said, as the question had been put before the House he had not the slightest objection to answer it. The Government had decided to proclaim the meeting had it been held last Sunday.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: It is easy to make that declaration; but why was it not done?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I presume the hon. and learned Gentleman does not cast doubt upon my words? The reason why the decision was not made public was because we had heard some time previously that owing to the debate which would take place on the Proclamation of the National League the meeting was to be postponed.

Mr. T. M. HEALY said, he thought the answer was a very fair one; but he desired to point out this curious fact. He presumed that it had been the intention of the Government from the very first to proclaim the meeting. This meeting had been announced nearly four weeks; but the responsible politicians who were concerned in the meeting, and who had made all their arrangements for attending it, never heard of the Proclamation until the Thursday morning—three days before the meeting—that it was to be put down. The Government would probably remember the famous case of O'Connell at Clontarf. In that case the Government were charged with having a desire to get O'Connell into a conflict with the law by issuing a Proclamation of the meeting at Clontarf almost on the eve of its being held; and it was charged, and not denied, that the Government took that course in order to get O'Connell into a trap. They had their guns presented from the Pigeonhouse Fort towards Clontarf, where the meeting was to be held. Now, it struck him (Mr. T. M. Healy) that the right hon. Gentleman wished to follow the fatal and unfortunate action of the Government of that day in postponing the Proclamation of the meeting to the last moment that he might get the people on the bayonets of the soldiers and police. He had been greatly surprised by the observations of the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland, when he said that no responsible politician had ever before challenged the action of the Executive. Was Cromwell a responsible politician? Was John Hampden a responsible politician? Were any of the men who made English liberties what they were prominent or responsible politicians? Every liberty won for this country and for Ireland had been won in defiance of their Executive. What were the bases of the Government's legality? The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had put himself into their hands when he stated that Lord Spencer proclaimed meetings. When Lord Spencer proclaimed meetings he had in every instance statutory warrant under the Crimes Act. Could the Government produce any authority or warrant under their Crimes Acts?

Mr. GIBSON: Lord Cowper proclaimed meetings before.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Yes, in the case of the Sheriffs' sales, although at these people were allowed to assemble, otherwise there would have been no auction; but he would tell the right hon. and learned Gentleman what Lord Cowper did. When Sheriffs' sales and evictions were going to be held, Lord Cowper issued Proclamations stating that he would not allow riotous assemblies at Sheriffs' sales; but he asked the Government to give an instance of Lord Cowper proclaiming a public meeting. He had listened with some amazement to the talk of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary as to the responsibility for bloodshed. He was not aware that there was to be any bloodshed next Sunday. The people would assemble and disperse when they had done their business; and probably instead of one meeting being held there would be 20 meetings held. In addition to this, a feeling of irritation would be produced in the minds of the people, which would probably have more detrimental effects than if the Government had left the meeting alone. The Government believed that the meeting would be mischievous in its results; but they may be assured that the consequences of the Proclamation would be mischievous. Supposing one drop of blood was spilt, did the Government think that the crimson stain shed by them in Clare next Sabbath would not—like the eddy in the pond—grow larger, and encircle in a far wider sweep than they ever contemplated? He deplored the conduct of the Government; they had no law or warrant on their side; they had nothing but the *ipse dixit* of Lord Londonderry. The Government said, however, that they had the Common Law. On the contrary, the Common Law was in favour of the Irish Members. The Common Law showed that where a sworn information was made it was laid down by the highest Courts in the country that the mere apprehension of the people going to create a disturbance was not a reason for the magistrates dispersing the meeting. He had always thought that instead of O'Connell going to Clontarf he should have gone somewhere else after the Proclamation. The Irish Members had advanced a long way since 1847. They knew better how to conduct politics and organizations since that time. They were old Parliamentary hands; old Constitutional hands so far as they were allowed to have any Constitution. [*Ironical cheers.*] He would withdraw the expression if it was offensive to hon. Gentlemen who had deprived them of it. Therefore, so far as the Constitution permitted they would face and put down the illegality of Her Majesty's Government. Lord Londonderry's Proclamation was a mere dummy; the fact that he had signed it gave him no more power than if it had been signed by John Smith, or W. H. Smith, or anybody else. Lord Spencer had the power under Statute; but was he to be told that when an Act of Parliament lapsed the power resided in the Executive? In the Act of 1882 the Government had to take statutory power to proclaim meetings; therefore they had no such power without the Statute. In the present Crimes Act the Government did not take any such statutory power; therefore in proclaiming the Ennis meeting they stood on the rotten footing of illegality. He might be told that the Government would resist the assembling of this meeting; but the power of the Government, after all, was limited by the number of soldiers and police at their disposal, and though by massing a large force at Ennis next Sunday they might succeed in preventing a meeting on this particular hill, still they had to consider the effect this would have upon the minds of the people. The people would be exasperated and inflamed at not being allowed to meet peaceably, and at being driven to hold hole-and-corner meetings on the highways and byways. Thousands of people would come there, and there would be plenty of people to address them; and would they prevent those people from listening to them? The Government were only at the beginning of their difficulties; they had only got their feet into the mess; they would be up to their chin in it soon. This particular Proclamation referred only to next Sunday and to County Clare. Supposing the Government could mass the British Army in the County Clare next Sunday — supposing they could bring their cannon—as he believed they did in one instance lately in New Ross—to sweep the approaches and prevent an assemblage, it would be very good in relation to the County Clare and in relation to next Sunday; but there were 52 Sundays in the year, and there were 32 counties in Ireland, and innumerable parishes and places where the people could assemble, and the Government would only drive the people to a game of hide and go-seek. After all, the Government had only got 30,000 troops and 12,000 police, and if they meant to be successful they would have largely to supplement this force. They were, therefore, trying to do what was practically attempting to keep back the tide with a pitchfork. The Proclamation would have a much more inflammatory effect than the right hon. Gentleman reckoned upon. He had flung down the glove to the Irish people. It was said that the Government on their own responsibility, at whatever cost, at whatever bloodshed, would resist the assemblage in Clare by force. Suppose some foolish Constabulary man should allow his rifle to go off, the matter could not end there. He would let the Irish people place their construction upon it. He would place his own. Suppose the leaders advised the people peaceably to disperse in Clare next Sunday; the policy of suppressing meetings could not stop here. The landords, in response to whose resolutions this meeting had been proclaimed, would have an appetite for more suppression, and the people would say—"We will not go to these meetings in future without some means of self-defence." Of course, the Government must be well aware that under the Arms Act they had only taken power to deprive the people of the ordinary weapons of war; but he apprehended that the people of Ireland would not tamely submit to illegality. That kind of thing could not be allowed to go on. The liberties of the people had to be won, sometimes at a very great price, and the fact that they had in the Government a number of Gentlemen sworn to put down the liberties of the masses of their fellow-countrymen would simply teach the Irish people that they had far better meet the Government fair and square at once. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman), after the Dromore meeting, when Giffen was killed, mourned thus—"A loyal man stabbed, and not a single Nationalist's head broken!" No doubt, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman found it a very unpleasant thing that no Nationalist's head had been broken; but now that he was at the beginning of directing operations against the Nationalists it was well to know that the very first Nationalist's head broken would not be the only head broken. In stating these facts he was not in any sense advising the Irish people to enter into a contest with the Government; he was simply indicating what he believed would be the result of the tyranny of the Government, and of their intention to needlessly spill the blood of the Irish people. The only chance for the people of Ireland to get fair play from the landlord Executive during the coming winter was the holding of public meetings. The landlords coveted the huts of the people; but the people would defend those huts, and their only means of defence was to assemble in their thousands to overawe tyranny and despotism. The Government of Ireland was a tyranny tempered by public meetings; and it was Captain Plunkett, and others like him, who had instigated the Government to proclaim this meeting. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary was doing the work of the landlords, whose puppet he was, whenever he stood up at the Table of the House. If hon. Gentlemen who voted away the lives and liberties of the Irish people could only see the conduct of this wretched crowd of landlords — from Sunday until Monday, and from the 1st of January to the 31st of December—who instigated them to that action, they would loathe and shrink from expressing approval of their conduct. It was that miserable gang of local landlords who had made Ireland detest the name of England, and caused English law to become a bye-word in Ireland. The Government might secure the friendship of 150,000 people in the country, instead of six; but they preferred the friendship of that miserable gang, simply for the purpose of preventing Irish landlords giving reductions of rent which English landlords had already given. That was the whole object of this Proclamation. It was as much a question of pounds, shillings, and pence as if the money were counted out on the Table; and it would be cheaper to vote the amount of the money to the landlords than to transport troops and policemen to Ennis next Sunday. It would be better to put a Vote on the Estimates every year for these reductions which the Irish landlords were called upon to make, but which the English landlords made voluntarily, than that there should be a repetition of these barbarities. It cost the taxpayers more to carry out these evictions than the whole reductions of rent came to; and he would, therefore, be in favour of reducing the Vote for Police and Resident Magistrates in order that the Irish landlords might be paid their rack-rents out of the Exchequer. It was a melancholy thing that English Governments went through the same round of repression year after year. Was war to be always going on in Ireland? Was there never to be any truce? Was there to be this winter the same round of scenes, sacrifices, disturbances, and even bloodshed that had occurred in previous winters? He told the Government that their Proclamation would be derided and torn up by the people. They would run a hole through it; they would drive a coach and four through it. The Proclamation would have just as much power to stop the people as the paper hoop had to stop the progress of the acrobat in a circus who leaped through it. The people of Clare would jump through the Proclamation as the acrobat jumped through the hoop, and would then hold it up and show others how it was done. The Government would issue one Proclamation after another, and get deeper and deeper into the mire, until the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, broken in health, spirits, and perhaps in reputation, would be replaced by someone who knew no more than the right hon. Gentleman had known last March, drafted on to the Treasury Bench to make new mistakes, and perhaps spill new blood. The Irish people knew it was useless to make further appeals to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, but they would make appeals outside ; and he would tell the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that he was treading in a path which lead nowhere, except to destruction so far as his own personal reputation was concerned. The course the Government were pursuing would do the landlords no good ; but, on the contrary, it would do them mischief. It would lead to irritation and, perhaps, to disorder, which in the end would only bring about what all must desire to prevent. It would make the Irish still more indignant against the English laws, would make them still more persistent, and might cause them to fling over the advice of their Representatives as the advice of men who were too moderate, because the Irish Members had strained their minds to give the people the advice of moderation within the past few months. He appealed to hon. Members opposite to use their influence ; to endeavour in private —they could not do it in that House because they would be denounced—to put some pressure upon Her Majesty's Government and try and knock a little common sense into the heads of the managers of the Irish Government. He assured them that if they did that they would do more good for their own country and for Ireland than they would do by any amount of support they gave to the policy of repression.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): I wish to say in all sincerity that if I were convinced that the meeting that is to be held on Sunday next is of such a character as to be manifestly an illegal meeting, or if I were satisfied that the Government had legal ground for the action which they propose to take next Sunday, I should—while deprecating the impolicy of the proceeding—abstain from condemning them by following the hon. Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon) into the Lobby, as I intend on the present evidence to do to-night. I listened to the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) and that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson); and I felt, after hearing both of them, more entirely bewildered than I was before they began as to the grounds on which this meeting is to be put down. What is the legal ground given by the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland for the course the Government are pursuing? It is not statutory ground. He said that the Government were proceeding under Common Law, and he defined the Common Law as this—that Her Majesty's Government in Ireland were entitled to suppress any meeting which, in their opinion, would tend to disorder and violence. Then as to the reason for the action which Her Majesty's Government have taken. The right hon. and learned Attorney General says that Clare—where this meeting is to be held—is in a disturbed condition; therefore, the result of the meeting will be violence and crime. There is a third reason which the Government allege for their action. It is that the Resident Magistrates of the neighbourhood are of opinion that disturbance of the peace will be the result of the meeting. Is that the Common Law of England ? I, for one, should be both sorry and surprised if such a doctrine could be proclaimed as the Common Law either in England or Ireland. If this meeting is to be suppressed, the Government is taking upon itself a great responsibility. It would be a great responsibility, even if the meeting were illegal, to put it down by bare brutal force. The only justification for such action would be in the case of what is called an unlawful assembly. I am going to read to the House a few sentences, in which the greatest living master of Criminal Law in England has defined what, according to the Common Law in England as well as in Ireland, is an unlawful assembly. Mr. Justice Stephen says—"An unlawful assembly is an assembly of three or four persons"—here the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland is on safe ground—

"together with intent to commit a crime by open force." Is that what the meeting in County Clare is going to do? Has anybody declared that they intend to commit crimes either by force or without force? On the contrary, those who have got up the meeting have declared their objects in the placard read this evening; and these objects have been admitted both by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland to be distinctly political, and not criminal. Another definition which Mr. Justice Stephen gives of an illegal assembly is this—

> "They must meet with intent to carry out any common purpose, lawful or unlawful, in such a manner as to give firm and courageous persons in the neighbourhood reasonable grounds for apprehending a breach of the peace in consequence of it."

Now, who are the firm and courageous persons in the neighbourhood of this proposed meeting who have given this information to the Government? Is that doctrine of the greatest master of the Criminal Law now living in England consistent with the doctrines laid down by the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland — namely, that wherever the Government believes that a meeting will tend to disorder, no matter what the intent of the persons calling it may be, it must be suppressed? When the legality of this procedure comes to be decided by a Court of Law, one of the points which will have to be considered is whether the Government have weakly yielded to panic, or whether their complainants were firm and courageous persons. The main thing is this. There must be an intention on the part of those who get up the meeting, not only to carry out the purpose of the meeting, but to carry it out in such a manner as to give those persons reasonable grounds to apprehend a breach of the peace. I call the House to bear witness that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland have shown nothing to justify a reasonable fear that any breach of the peace whatever is likely to result from this meeting. All they allege is that this is a public meeting on an exciting subject in an excited neighbourhood, and that the result will be to tend to disorder. Is the language of Mr. Justice Stephen consistent with that position? I say, with reference to the action the Government are taking, that this House is called upon to preserve, not merely the liberties of Ireland, but the liberties of England—and, as a Scotch Member, I will say the liberties of Scotland as well. The House should follow the well-beaten and authoritative path marked out in the words of Mr. Justice Stephen, and repudiate and refuse the vague and unconstitutional legal doctrines laid down by the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland. There is another point. Though the Proclamation has been read to the House, we do not yet know what the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary or the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland intend to do on Sunday; but I now put the question boldly and broadly in this House. Do they mean to put down this meeting with the exercise of all the force that may be necessary to prevent the people coming together to that assembly? We are told by those who are well entitled to speak, by those who are advertised to address the meeting, that they mean to go to that meeting and resist with legal force any force that may be used against them. I put it to the Government—Do you intend to use the powers that undoubtedly are at your disposal? Do you intend to use the fullest influence that may be necessary to enable you to put down the meeting which you have declared to be illegal? Do you intend, if necessary, to kill — legally if your view is right, but illegally if your view turns out to be wrong, and that of Mr. Justice Stephen is right — those who insist on holding that meeting, contrary to the Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant? That position you are bound to take up. Your ground is utterly worthless. Unless you commit yourself to the most extreme consequences—namely, to the extent of bloodshed—you will not prevent that meeting being held. What I ask is — Are you willing to back your opinion as to the unlawfulness of this assembly to the extent of killing those who may choose to take part in it? If you have not that intention your Proclamation, I venture to say, is worthless. If you have that intention, the seriousness of the case is such that this House ought to pause before assenting to the position which Her Majesty's Government have taken up. I, for one, will be no party to it, either by my vote, or my voice, or my silence. I hope the Tory Party itself will pause before committing the House to such an extreme and such a dangerous position as that which I have shown to be the necessary and logical consequence of the doctrines which have been laid down in this House to-night.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.) said, they were entitled to assume, and did assume, that this meeting, which was convened for political purposes, was, by the admission of the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson), suppressed for political purposes. He (Mr. Clancy) challenged contradiction when he said that three-fourths of all the meetings suppressed in Ireland had been suppressed in the counties of Clare and Kerry; and yet crime, instead of decreasing, had actually increased in these particular localities to a larger extent than in any other part of Ireland. It seemed to him that if the Government had not the action of the last Liberal Government to point to in defence of coercion they would not have a leg to stand upon in this controversy, or any of the recent controversies in which they were engaged. They were told, as usual, that what the Government proposed to do now had been done by Liberal Governments in former years. But, even if that were true, how could it be argued that because a Liberal Administration once acted in defiance of the principles of liberty, the present Government were justified in acting in the same way? The answer to that was this —that two wrongs did not make a right. Among the many remarkable admissions which Lord Spencer had made since he gave up the government of Ireland the most remarkable was that the result of his action in suppressing public meetings and carrying out the coercion policy of the last Administration was from day to day to increase the power of the Nationalist Party, and that from day to day the power of the English Government in Ireland to maintain its position decreased steadily. Let the Government bear that in mind. They might suppress 50 or 60 meetings; they might imprison 1,000 men; they might hang 20 or 30 persons for political offences; but all he could say was that when the present Government had carried out their present policy of coercion, the result would inevitably be the same as in Lord Spencer's experience, and they, or their Successors—if Successors of the same kidney still sat upon those Benches—would be forced to say that their policy of coercion was a failure—that from day to day the consequence of it was not to decrease but to increae the strength of the National Party in Ireland and weaken the power of the British Administration.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) said, that, as a Member of that House, he desired to wash his hands publicly of the awful responsibility that rested on those who supported the Government on that occasion. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) had truly said that the Proclamation did not make illegal that which was innocent in England. He would remind hon. Members of this—that there was a vital difference between the position of the Government now and that of Lord Spencer's Government. Lord Spencer had a special statutory power to suppress meetings at his own discretion; but that was not the case with the present Government. He gathered from the right hon. and learned Attorney General that what constituted the illegality in his eyes was not what would occur at the meeting on Sunday, but certain "ulterior consequences" of an injurious character which he imagined, at some future period, might flow from that meeting. If that was the ground on which the right hon. and learned Gentleman rested, he warned him that if any of his subordinates should come before a jury it would be the duty of the Judge to charge that jury that that afforded no ground of illegality whatsoever. The only circumstances that could by any possibility make an ordinary meeting unlawful would be that the manner in which it was brought about was such as to give firm and courageous men reasonable belief that a breach of the peace would arise. Ulterior consequences had nothing to do with it; and no person, no soldier or policeman, engaged at the meeting derived any protection whatever from that Proclamation. If a jury found there was no reasonable ground for anticipating breach of the peace, every one of the persons was liable for assault, and if any lives were lost they would be liable to be tried for murder. It appeared to him that the Government had now entered on the fatal path which for some time he had foreseen they would be obliged to take. They had now openly declared war on public meetings in Ireland. He challenged any hon. Member who had heard the placard read to say, if this was not a legitimate public meeting, what political meeting possibly could be legitimate in Ireland. Nothing had been alleged to justify the Government in suppressing this meeting which would not justify them in suppressing all meetings. That was a very serious state of affairs. If it was not too late, he would address a word of warning to the Government. For many years past the political affairs of this country had been conducted without extreme violence on the part of one Party towards another; but the Government had taken powers to give the plank bed, the prison code, starvation fare, and the treadmill to their political opponents in that House. That was a very serious thing, because, if his reading of history was not entirely wrong, wicked conduct of that kind led to reprisals. Hon. Members opposite would not always be in power. The turn of the other side would come—the turn of an indignant and an outraged democracy would come—and he feared that the example which had been set of violence and illegality by hon. Members on the Ministerial Benches might produce evil and injurious consequences. They had heard from the landlords and their friends that the cure for all the difficulties of the Irish tenant was the emigration of the people from the soil——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not keeping himself to the point of definite public importance—namely, the Proclamation of a meeting next Sunday.

Mr. HUNTER said, he was afraid that in his illustration he had gone a little beyond that point. He only wished, before sitting down, to say that the course which the Government had wantonly adopted was a proceeding like that of the bloody Peterloo; and all he could say was that they would be very fortunate if the massacre of Peterloo was not crowned by the worse massacre of bloody Ennis.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland) said, he was surprised that the two able addresses from two able lawyers had received no reply from the Treasury Bench. He had heard nothing from the Treasury Bench to show that in the opinion of the Government the meeting was illegal.

Mr. GIBSON said, it was the duty of the Government to act upon the view which they took.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman claimed that if they thought a meeting was dangerous to the public peace they were acting legally in proclaiming that meeting. He must say that that was an opinion which might have been proclaimed with some show of reason some time ago; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman was surely not unaware of the fact that a Member of that House—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), who was at one time Home Secretary, and who had been an eminent practitioner at the Bar—had declared that that conception of the Common Law right of the Government was wrong. The Executive possessed no such right, the decision in the Salvation Army case having disposed of any such claim. If Lord Spencer and the Executive had a Common Law right to proclaim meetings and prevent them, why was it necessary to confer that right upon them by Statute in that House? He contended that the Act of 1881 was unnecessary and uncalled for. The doctrine laid down seemed to be that because something might be said which the Government would not like, therefore the meeting should be suppressed. The position they were in then was that if a number of persons meet next Sunday in spite of that Proclamation they would be acting perfectly within their legal right, and if they disregarded the Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant they would disregard a Proclamation that was illegal, and that if they defended their rights against the police sent to disperse them they were defending their legal right against illegal offenders. He wished to know what crime the Government would be guilty of if their soldiers or police shed innocent blood, when they were acting illegally, and when those whom they killed were acting within their legal rights? He was astonished at the action of the Government. He thought that with all the powers they had at their disposal they would, at all events, attempt to minimize the action of the Executive with reference to large bodies of men. They had the power to strike, and to strike hard, at individuals who offended them or made themselves unpleasant. That being so, surely they might have refrained from interfering with large political rights. He should have thought, also, that the circumstances of the times would have been a reason for their not needlessly provoking the people. The fact of it was the Government had proclaimed war against the Irish people. Their Proclamation was issued in that spirit, and it would be received in that spirit by the Irish people, and it would be resisted in that spirit. By the time this conflict was over, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would be as bankrupt and dishonoured as ever Judge Jeffreys was; and right hon. Gentlemen who were in the position of the Government would be as bankrupt and disreputable a political Party as ever used power which a temporary chance had given them.

Mr. ROWNTREE (Scarborough) said, that a more unfortunate expression never was used than the expression used by the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) with reference to English and Scotch political Reformers. The right hon. and learned Attorney General told them that if the people of Ireland were left alone and were not interfered with by political performers things would go on all right; but it was because he and others believed they had a great duty to do towards the poor peasants of Ireland that they were found devoting themselves to that duty. Perhaps at no period of history had so many evictions gone on without crime being committed; and were English Members to be warned away from Ireland and be told that they were political performers? The abject condition into which the Irish people had sunk might be inferred from the fact that when he was in Ireland the people, hearing that he was a Member of Parliament, crowded round him, and asked him whether he could not do them some good, imploring him, at all events, not to do them any harm. It would be doing the Irish people a great deal of harm and a great wrong to take away the last miserable rag of their liberty which existed in the right of public meeting; and it struck him that it was a most melancholy finish of this Session of Parliament.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 61; Noes 97: Majority 36.—(Div. List, No. 440.)
[7.20 p.m.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £104,809, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board in Ireland, including various Grants in Aid of Local Taxation."

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.): Some cases connected with the attempts which have been made by the Emigration Committee appointed by the authorities in Dublin to emigrate the peasants from Westport and Newport have recently been under investigation in the constituency which I represent — West Mayo. I have on more than one occasion put a Question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on the subject. Under the Tramways Act of 1882, a sum of £100,000 was granted for aiding emigrants, and the Tramways Act of 1883 authorized the Treasury to grant a further sum for the same purpose. The money, I believe, was handed over to the Local Government Board, and is now being expended under their supervision. Close upon £1,450 has been expended within the last few months by a Mr. Stoney, a gentleman residing in West Mayo, in aid of the passages and expenses of emigrants from the West of Ireland, although not one of the emigrants was allowed to leave the country without the sanction of the Inspector of the Local Government Board, Captain Sampson. In connection with this emigration a great deal of scandal arose, which for a considerable time was concealed from the Government. The parish priest of Newport, near which place Mr. Stoney resides, ascertained that many things were sanctioned by Mr. Stoney and the Inspector which were not creditable to the Local Government Board. He therefore demanded the strictest investigation and inquiry into the charges which were made against Mr. Stoney, with the result that an Inspector was sent down to inquire into the charges which were made. I have now to complain that, although a month has elapsed since the inquiry was commenced, I have been absolutely unable to obtain any details of the investigation from any Member of the Irish Government. I have put several Questions to the Chief Secretary, and I have received answers from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary; but he has only told me that no decision has yet been arrived at by the Local Government Board, and therefore that it would be neither fair nor just towards Mr. Stoney to give me the particulars which I ought to have in order to bring forward the question I desire to discuss. It is certainly important to know what conclusion has been arrived at in reference to Mr. Stoney and Captain Sampson; and it appears to me that information has been suppressed in order to prevent any hon. Members from going into the question as fully as it ought to be gone into. I must say that the deliberate refusal to give information has occasioned great inconvenience, and I hope the Chief Secretary will be able to give the Committee some explanation for the delay in producing the Report, which I consider to have been both unwarrantable and unnecessary. I have been told that the gentlemen against whom the charges have been made have given a complete and detailed account of the way in which the money was spent. I have no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary believes that, but I certainly do not; and I have strong reason to believe, from information I have received from my constituents in West Mayo, that Mr. Stoney was not able to produce more than a few receipts from the hundreds of families he has emigrated from the West of Ireland. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that this gentleman has put a considerable amount of money in his own pocket, and that the agent he employed was guilty of embezzling part of it. Of course, it is easy for the right hon. Gentleman to get up and say that Mr. Stoney has rendered a complete account; but he is only acting upon information he has received from Dublin Castle. The reason I press the Government for the particulars is that I think the Local Government Board desire to shield their own officer. The manner in which the Committee was appointed is worthy of mention, and I am afraid that I shall have to speak for some time on the question, because I look upon it as one of national as well as local importance. The policy of the Government has been to exterminate the population. They simply think it a good job to get rid of them at any cost. This has been their persistent policy, although over and over again it has been shown not to be in the interests of the people. I find that, in an underhand way, the Government appointed an Emigration Committee in February last, and another in March, with a view of getting rid of what they call the congestion. The policy of successive Governments has been to keep these unfortunate people in poverty and ignorance, and then to remove them from remote districts in Ireland, where no English is spoken, to the United States, or any other part of the civilized world, where they find themselves in a state of destitution and surrounded by evil influences. Surely it would be better for them to be in their own country than in the back slums of New York. I say this is a false policy, and one which the Government should abandon; and I trust that after the statements I shall be able to make, from information I have received in connection with the inquiry which took place at Westport, that the Government will desist from these attempts to emigrate the people. Who is the gentleman who was appointed at the head of the Emigration Committee, and of what is the Committee composed? Last February, the Local Government Board, or some other authority in Dublin, nominated a number of gentlemen in Westport and Newport, without their knowledge, to act on the Emigration Committee. I do not complain of the nomination of the Committee generally; but I do complain of the appointment of Mr. Stoney at the head of it. He was a bankrupt landlord, notorious for rack-renting, and for exterminating the small tenantry on his own estate; and to give such a man complete control of the funds voted by Parliament for the purpose of relieving distress was nothing short of a public scandal. I have received a letter from gentlemen at Newport who say that they found their names among the Committee for the Relief of the Poor by Emigration entirely without their knowledge, and the moment they ascertained that they had been associated with Mr. Stoney and others they at once refused to have anything to do with the whole business. On the 5th of August several clergymen and shopkeepers disclaimed having anything to do with the proceedings of the Committee or the distribution of the money, although they found, to their amazement, that their names were made public as having been parties to what was done by Mr. Stoney. One of these gentlemen says that it was by mere accident he found his name mentioned as being allied to this gentleman, and he adds that he was in a position to deny from the commencement of the proceedings that he had any hand or part in them, and that on no account would he be concerned in any of the transactions to which this gentleman had been a party. Why I principally object to Mr. Stoney's connection with this matter is that he is notoriously a man who has been endeavouring to exterminate his own tenants. He is a man who wants money, and it is perfectly obvious to anyone who knows the relations between Mr. Stoney and the people of the district, and especially his own tenants, that nothing short of a robbery of the public funds could have taken place under his direction. The serious charge which I bring against him is a charge which I shall be able to show, from evidence taken by the Local Government Board Inspector at Westport, was fully proved. Evidence was given of a great number of disreputable transactions; although I willingly admit that many of them took place through the misconduct of his agent, of which he may have had no direct knowledge, but for which I hold him responsible, because he ought to have appointed an agent of respectability. About seven or eight years ago a Bill was passed by the Government giving to the Irish landlords £150,000 for the purpose of reclaiming waste lands. We know what became of part of that money; and if the Chief Secretary will explain how the rest of it went, I am sure he will give most interesting information to the Committee. That attempt failed to do any good to the tenants of Ireland. The landlords, who borrowed the greater part of the money themselves under that Act, put it into their own pockets.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that he is now entering into a question which is altogether outside this Vote.

MR. DEASY: Then I will not pursue the matter further. I was merely endeavouring to illustrate the policy of the Government, and attempting to show a direct connection between what was done then under the Act of 1881 and what has been done in this instance. However, as you, Sir, have ruled me out of Order, I will not pursue the subject. I will only say that to place the distribution of public money in the hands of a man like Mr. Stoney was an act of folly which cannot be too strongly reprobated. It is only because I believe that what has taken place is part of the policy of the Government that I desire to refer to what occurred seven or eight years ago. In my judgment, this system of emigration is nothing but a means for putting money into the pockets of impecunious Irish landlords. I propose to make three charges against Mr. Stoney—first, that he used the money for the purpose of exterminating his own tenants; secondly, that he profited directly by keeping a large amount of public money in his own hands to enlarge his own estate, without rendering a proper account of the money distributed; and, thirdly—and this is the most serious charge of all—that he applied a large amount of the money for the purpose, whether intentionally or not, of subsidizing and encouraging immorality among the emigrants. He offered bribes of a large amount to tradesmen in Newport, in order to encourage the carrying out of this policy, so as to secure that there should be no failure in it, and that he should profit by what went on. I have here a letter which I received a short time ago from a Mr. Moran, whose name was on the Emigration Committee, but who refused to have anything to do with Mr. Stoney in the matter.

He states, most positively, that a man named Gannon, an agent of Mr. Stoney, went to him several days before the first batch of emigrants were sent away, and asked him if he would act on the Committee, intimating at the same time that if he consented to do so it would be made worth something to him. This man Gannon, on behalf of Mr. Stoney, told Moran that if he would only take part on the Emigration Committee in sending these people away by a Transatlantic line of steamers he would get at least £300. A more disgraceful proposal was never made; but Mr. Moran, who is a public-spirited man, refused to have anything to do with it, and then Mr. Gannon went about the neighbourhood stating that Mr. Moran had lost at least £300, because he refused to comply with his wishes. Now, if this agent was able to offer £300 to another person as profit out of the transaction, what was the Chairman of the Committee, through whose hands the money went, likely to get for his own purposes? I am quite sure that Mr. Stoney and his friends would have had nothing to do with the carrying out of the scheme if they had not thought that they would derive considerable benefit from it themselves. Of course, the statement of Moran may be discredited by the Treasury Bench, on the ground that he gave no evidence before the Inspector; but he tendered evidence, and the Local Government Board Inspector refused to allow him to put a single question to Mr. Stoney. What was the ground upon which Mr. Micks, the Local Government Board Inspector, declined to hear what Mr. Moran had to say, and declined to allow him to put a single question to the witness, I am unable to say; but, as the inquiry was held for a specific purpose—namely, to investigate certain charges brought against the Emigration Committee by Father Greedie and Father Cohen—I do not complain of the course taken by the Inspector. It is obvious that if every man who chose to make charges against a witness were allowed to do so, there would have been no end to the inquiry. The second charge which I have brought against Mr. Stoney is that he has used this money for the purpose of enlarging his own estate, and for getting his tenants' land into his own hands, and for forcing people to accept emigration without rendering a proper account of the money distributed. I have here in my hand a letter from a rev. gentleman who resides in Mr. Stoney's district. He tells me that, in a short time, no fewer than 14 tenants of Mr. Stoney's were obliged to take passage tickets to America, and to give up their land to the landlord. [The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.) dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman opposite shakes his head. At any rate, these tenants have been obliged to shift their quarters from the land they held formerly, and I am told that most of them have emigrated. I think I shall be able to prove, according to Mr. Stoney's own admission, that this charge is well-founded; and it is beyond all question that this man has been inducing his tenants to leave the country by bribing them to give up their farms. A very large portion of this sum of £1,450 has been used for that purpose, and that is the reason why I have mentioned the matter. My third charge is that Mr. Stoney has applied a large amount of the money for the purpose of subsidizing and encouraging immorality. The cases to which I refer are cases which have been brought before the Local Government Board Inspector. They have been shown to be within Mr. Stoney's knowledge, although Captain Sampson, who from the first said he had great doubts of the fact, has not been shown to be connected with it. An admission was made by three of the witnesses examined that young unmarried men, and young unmarried women, were permitted to go to America as man and wife, although they were not relatives, and the money was voted by Parliament for an entirely different purpose — namely, to encourage people to go away in families, in order to relieve the congestion which existed in the West of Mayo. In a very nice way, assuredly, this congestion has been relieved upon Mr. Stoney's property. The first case investigated was that of Thomas Holding, and the first witness called before Mr. Micks in reference to that case was Mary Waller, who deposed that she was the wife of Thomas Waller; that her husband got a ticket from Mr. Stoney; that she had seven children—four boys and three girls—but that some of her children went away with her husband, although others went with him as members of his family who were in no way related to or connected with him. Now, this is a case in which Mr. Stoney deliberately gave a passage to a man and allowed his family to remain, although one of the conditions laid down by the Acts of 1882 and 1883 was that whole families should be emigrated together, and that on no account should other persons go with the family. Mr. Stoney knew very well everyone who lived within 15 or 20 miles of his own residence; and yet he not only allowed, without sufficient inquiry, a number of strangers to go to America in contravention of the Act of Parliament, but he encouraged young girls to go with families with whom they had no connection. This was distinctly shown by the evidence of a woman named Kelly. She was asked —"Did Mr. Stoney tell you he knew the names of the persons who went out?" and the answer was—"Yes; he named every one of them." On being asked if any of her own family went, she replied—"Yes; Bridget, father, and one daughter out of seven." She was then asked why her husband did not take the others with him, and her answer was that Mr. Stoney said he did not care who he took, he only wanted to let them have their fling. At the close of this evidence Mr. Stoney was asked if he had any questions to put to the witness, and he declined to do so. If Mr. Stoney had any denial to make to these statements, I should like to know why that denial was not forthcoming? [The hon. Member then referred to other cases, and read long extracts from the depositions of the witnesses.] Continuing, he said—From what I have stated there is abundant evidence to show that Mr. Stoney has misappropriated the public funds, and that he has been acting entirely contrary to the provisions of two Acts of Parliament passed for the purpose of assisting emigration. The Act of Parliament expressly stipulates that whole families should be emigrated; but Mr. Stoney, acting as emigration agent, has not only allowed parts of families to go, but has permitted strangers to accompany them. The Act of Parliament has thus been broken, and the public money misapplied. I submit that this is a most serious state of things, seeing that these acts have been done with the aid of money voted by this House. Perhaps I may be allowed to refer to another case. John Mattherson was examined by Mr. Kelly——

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Perhaps it may shorten the hon. Gentleman's case if I say that the evidence he has quoted is admitted, and that it is not my intention to make any defence.

MR. DEASY: If the right hon. Gentleman admits the fact, and will give me an assurance that the case of Mr. Stoney will be considered by the Law Officers of the Crown for the purpose of seeing whether they cannot institute a criminal prosecution against him, I should be quite ready to leave the matter where it stands at present.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot pledge myself to go as far as the hon. Gentleman wishes; but I am quite ready to admit that Mr. Stoney has been guilty of grave dereliction of duty, and possibly, in some cases, of something more.

MR. DEASY: To some extent I am satisfied with the admission the right hon. Gentleman has made, but only to a certain extent. Having regard to the serious nature of the case, I hope I may be permitted to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will consult the Law Officers of the Crown, and ask them to consider whether Mr. Stoney has not laid himself open to a criminal prosecution? If the Law Officers think so, then I ask that Mr. Stoney and his agent shall be prosecuted for the grave offence they have committed. I would further ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will lay a statement of the case before the Lord Chancellor, with a view of consulting him on the propriety—indeed, the absolute advisability—of depriving Mr. Stoney of the Commission of the Peace?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Report of the Local Government Board Inspector, who carefully inquired into the matter, has just come to hand. I agree with the hon. Gentleman that the result of the investigation has been to show that Mr. Stoney has been guilty of very grave neglect, and in some cases of even more than that—namely, wilful neglect. I shall certainly forward the Report to the Law Officers of the Crown; but I doubt whether a criminal action would lie against Mr. Stoney.

Mr. DEASY: Will the right hon. Gentleman also lay the case before the Lord Chancellor?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The Lord Chancellor will see it as a matter of course.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I think this is a case which calls for immediate action. If Mr. Stoney has misapplied the public money—and the Chief Secretary admits that he has—he is not a fit person to be on the Commission of the Peace in Ireland. Men have been struck off the Commission of the Peace for much less offences than that. The right hon. Gentleman says that the Lord Chancellor will see the case as a matter of course. I think, however, that we ought to have a distinct pledge that the matter will be brought before the Lord Chancellor at once, and that he will take immediate action upon it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There is no proof that Mr. Stoney has been guilty of malversation of public money.

Mr. M. J. KENNY: I said misapplication.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: There certainly has been misapplication, and I repeat that the matter will come before the Lord Chancellor in the usual way.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I hope that my hon. Friend the Member for West Mayo (Mr. Deasy) will be satisfied with the assurance he has received, and that he will not at the present moment press the matter further. I concur in the view that the Government ought to take stringent action; but I think my hon. Friend was well advised in what he said in regard to the Local Government Board Inspector not having developed any further charges than those which were laid before him. I believe the Inspector who conducted the inquiry is a public authority in whom complete confidence is reposed. I have risen now, however, to put a question to the Government upon the very grave national question which has arisen between this country and America in consequence of the emigration of penniless people from Ireland by acts similar to those which have taken place under Mr. Stoney. I wish to know whether the Correspondence which has passed on the subject between Lord Salisbury and our Minister at Washington (Sir L. Sackville West) will be published? I believe the last telegram was one from Lord Salisbury, in which he sent for a list of cases in which these emigrants had been stopped by the United States. In view of the scandal which has arisen already from the way in which this emigration fund has been managed, and the grave scandals which may arise from the indiscriminate sending over of poor people from Ireland, I wish to know whether the Government intend to put a stop, in future, to this system of indecent emigration, which offends not only the public sentiment of America, but of Ireland, and produces the very gravest scandals by giving power to such persons as Mr. Stoney to squander the public money?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not the intention of the Irish Government to allow any public money to be applied to emigration purposes during this year. I am afraid I cannot give any further promise than that.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: May I also ask when the further Correspondence on the subject will be published; because I believe that public feeling both in Ireland and in America has been keenly aroused on the subject.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am unable to say when the further Correspondence will be published. I can only repeat that there is no intention to allow further public money to be applied to emigration purposes this year.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly give an answer to the question I put to him yesterday in reference to the course which has been taken by New Ross and Wexford in regard to the payment of rates?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman has given the House to understand that peace is likely to be established in New Ross, and that the declaration against the payment of rates has been withdrawn. I believe that there is at this moment a financial disturbance in the Union in consequence of a recent dispute; but I hope in a short time to allow the Guardians to be returned. I am anxious, however, that financial order should be restored before the Union is returned into the hands of the Local Authorities.

Mr. M. J. KENNY: I wish to call attention to a Question asked by the hon. Member for West Clare (Mr. Jordan) a short time ago, in reference to the desire which has been expressed by the Ennistymon Board of Guardians that one of the chaplains should be paid by fees, and not by salary. My hon. Friend complained that the Local Government Board insisted upon appointing a chaplain to the workhouse at a fixed salary. The salary, no doubt, is very small; but the objection the Board of Guardians take to it is that it is fixed. They do not object to the chaplain being paid by fees; their only objection is that he should have a fixed salary. As a matter of fact, the predecessor of the gentleman who was recently appointed had been 10 years in the chaplaincy of the workhouse, and during the whole of that time he had only visited two or three times. A fee of 10*s.* a visit would, I think, be considered a fair remuneration for walking half-a-mile to the workhouse and back again, and, of course, it would be much cheaper in the long run for the Union. I would ask the Local Government Board to ascertain the legal meaning of the word "salary," which I believe has never yet been defined. I believe, however, that when a person is paid a fixed rate per head for his visits that that is considered to fall within the meaning of the word "salary." There is no objection whatever to pay this rev. gentleman so much per visit; but in the course of 10 years his predecessor received £100 and only visited the workhouse three times.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): In this case, the rev. gentleman who has been referred to was getting £10 a-year, and the salary has been reduced to £5. The Guardians now object to pay him anything, except per visit, and they have offered to give him 10*s.* per visit. The sum is very small, and I believe it would require fresh legislation to have a chaplain paid by fees. I have received a piteous letter from the rev. gentleman complaining of the smallness of the sum now paid to him, and expressing a hope that it will not be still further reduced.

MR. M. J. KENNY: Considering that the sum has been reduced, I think I may waive the question of principle. The answer of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman, however, is not entirely satisfactory. My hon. Friend the Member for West Clare, who put the Question down on the Paper, is not now in his place, and therefore I have brought the matter before the House on his behalf.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.): May I ask if it is the intention of the Government to send paid agents for the relief of the distress which is now existing at Clifden? I believe that the poverty of Clifden and the neighbourhood has been brought about by emigration, although I believe that Mr. Tuke and Captain Laslett have acted with the best intentions in their endeavours to relieve the people of the locality by providing them with the means of emigrating. But it has had an entirely opposite effect to that which was intended; because the persons who have been emigrated are the young and the strong people of the district, who have been in the habit of supporting the old and feeble. There have been about 7,000 people emigrated from Connemara, the old, the feeble, and the weak being left behind; and the consequence is that the shopkeepers and the persons who have remained have suffered alike. I should like to receive from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman some assurance that a little relief will be afforded.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I do not see how the Government is to say either yea or nay. If young people will go away, we cannot object. The Government are very well aware of the poverty of the district, and from my own experience I concur with the hon. Gentleman as to the injurious effect of emigrating the bone and sinew of the country wholesale; but I do not know that it is a matter in which any Government can interfere.

MR. HARRIS: I am very glad to hear the expression of opinion which has fallen from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. I should, however, like to know at whose expense these persons have been emigrated?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I believe at the expense of an emigration fund which has been administered by Mr. Tuke and Captain Laslett.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): The question I desire to call attention to is the delay which has arisen in carrying out the Labourers' Dwellings Act. I know that in my own Union the Guardians have made applications, and that months elapsed before the Inspector held any inquiry. Of course, the labourers have suffered greatly in consequence of the delay. I think some power should be taken by the Local Government Board to reduce, if possible, the cost of carrying the Act into operation; and I should like to know from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary, or from the Attorney General for Ireland, whether the proceedings of the Local Government Board in this matter can be expedited and the costs reduced? In cases where the Board of Guardians have promoted the scheme great delay and expense has been incurred in consequence of the claim of the landlords to be exempted.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): I am aware that there has been some delay, owing to the number of applications which have been made under the Act. I will inquire into the cause of the delay, and also into the amount of the cost. I am aware that a considerable amount of cost attends the working of the Act. The employment of engineers and of law agents, I am sorry to say, entails considerable expense; and then, again, there is the cost of an investigation by the Local Government Board, and of carrying it subsequently to the Privy Council. I should certainly be glad if something could be done to reduce the cost.

DR. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore): May I call the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to the fact that many of the resolutions which have been passed at public meetings, and which have been forwarded to the Local Government Board, have received no attention? As far back as 1885 the first step was taken towards the erection of labourers' cottages, and the great delay which has taken place in erecting them is principally due to the red-tape of the Local Government Board, assisted by the obstructive tactics of the *ex officio* Guardians. A resolution has been passed asking for a sworn inquiry before a Local Government Board Inspector; but no steps have been taken to comply with it. I hope that it is only necessary to call attention to the matter, and that the Government will do something in regard to it.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I desire to say a few words in regard to this labourers' question. I know the great interest which has always been taken in the matter by Members of this House, and especially by hon. Gentlemen opposite. I am glad to see that the Parliamentary Under Secretary, who for some time was blooming alone on the Treasury, like the last rose of summer, has now been relieved by the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland. I only wish to remind the Government that they have long been endeavouring to ingratiate themselves with the labouring portion of the population. Therefore, I presume that they take a deep interest in this labourers' cottages question, and I wish to make an appeal to them to redeem the pledges upon which they came into Office, but which they have never yet carried out. I was accustomed to hear from my Irish Tory Friends before they Boycotted me that they were going to take up the case of the labourers in earnest.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that this question can only be discussed in reference to the action of the Local Government Board.

DR. TANNER: Quite so, Mr. Courtney; I was only endeavouring to lead up to that question.

THE CHAIRMAN: No excuse is necessary if the hon. Member will come to the point at once.

DR. TANNER: I always feel glad, Sir, to bow to any ruling that may fall from you, and I will at once proceed to the point. This Vote includes the Local Government Inspectors who have to proceed to various districts in Ireland in order to carry out the duty of supervising the erection of labourers' cottages. In the district which I represent there are three Unions—Macroom, Millstreet, and a portion of the Cork Union, which from time to time have been subjected to serious annoyance and vexation in their efforts to get the Act carried out by hook or by crook. They have, however, failed, as a rule, to induce the Local Government Board to send down an Inspector. So sick and disgusted am I with the way in which the Government have behaved that, unless I get a satisfactory assurance from the Government, I shall take a Division upon this Vote, and upon three or four other points in connection with the Vote. I have tried again and again to obtain information. I have constantly put down Questions, and I have always been told that the

Government would take cognizance of the remonstrances I have made; but it has all been of no avail. Schemes have been passed, and money has been voted; but owing to the continued and persistent obstruction of the Local Government Board in the district I represent, the cottages which are so urgently required have not been erected. I very much regret to find that in carrying out the duties of the Local Government Board, the Government are not paying that attention to the case of the labourers which their supporters have at all times demanded in the South of Ireland. Unfortunately they never practice what they preach. In connection with the subject, however, we have lately been furnished with a very valuable Return which was asked for by one of the Members for the County of Wicklow—namely, a Return in connection with the administration of the Local Government Board as to the Labourers' Cottages Act. That Return shows the miserable half-heartedness with which the Local Government Board have tried to carry on its business. In regard to the Macroom Union, there were 420 cottages applied for. Of that number 315 were authorized by the order of the Local Government Board; but of those we have only had 55 cottages erected. I do not propose to go into all the columns of figures contained in the tabulated statement which has been presented to every Member of the House. Hon. Members will be able to see for themselves, that in the Macroom Union the people have probably less to complain of than in any other district, and it was only because I happen to represent that district that I have brought the matter before the Committee. It will be seen that in the Macroom district, out of 420 cottages applied for, and 315 passed by the Local Government Board Inspector, and passed only in consequence of continual remonstrances, and only one-sixth of those which are authorized to be erected have been put up. I have been down to Macroom myself on three or four occasions in order to try and settle the differences which have existed, and to egg on the Government to get these homes erected. If hon. Members will compare this statement in connection with the Macroom Union with any other district they will see how unsatisfactory the whole state of the matter is. The Labourers' Act was passed in the year 1883, and a second Act was passed in 1885, with the object of benefiting a long suffering class of a starving population. The Return I hold in my hand shows, however, that neither the Local Government Board nor Her Majesty's Government have done their duty in providing what it was the intention of this House to provide. In the Macroom Union something has been done in consequence of the action of persons connected with the Union. Her Majesty's Government are in the habit of saying that any delay or obstruction is due to local causes. I deny that that is the case, and I think that these facts and figures show that I am correct. In the Millstreet Union leave has been applied for to erect 133 cottages, and 108 were authorized. Of the total number only 25 were rejected by the Local Government Board, including those which were withdrawn by the Sanitary Authority. There have, however, been none built—not a single cottage has been erected. In the month of September last I tried to induce the Local Government Board to send down an Inspector; but they said it was of no use, because there were many other points to consider. I believe that an Inspector went down in May last; and that is the manner in which the Act passed in 1883 for the relief of the labourers has been carried out. If it had been a Coercion Act it would have been applied at once; but a remedial measure is always delayed. I have said that there have been no cottages erected. I believe there are a number in the course of erection; but not one has yet been completed. Nevertheless, the preliminary expenses incurred by the Local Government Board have been very considerable. I find that money has been spent in every way that was possible except in the erection of these cottages; £9 10*s*. was spent in advertising, £19 9*s*. in shorthand writers, £37 7*s*. in solicitors and counsel, £3 13*s*. in the publication of the Order, and there were minor expenses amounting to £66 1*s*. These are expenses literally incurred by the Local Government Board in relation to this scheme, and the total amounts to £159 1*s*. 6*d*. Nevertheless, nothing has been done. I maintain that the carrying out of the Act is shamefully neglected and delayed. Numerous efforts have been made to induce the Local Government Board to do something in the matter, and surely the Board have a sufficient amount of power in their own hands to enable them to deal with the question. Nevertheless, this serious delay has arisen from some cause or other. Possibly it is owing to the fact that the authorities have been obstructed by the action of the people whose land is proposed to be allocated for the erection of labourers' cottages. Another cause, I am told, has been the position selected for the erection of the cottages. The Government say that the delay is entirely attributable to local differences; but surely the Local Government Board have Inspectors of great ability—for instance, there is Colonel Spaight, who has been mentioned in this House on more than one occasion. He is a gentleman of the greatest possible courtesy and ability, and he has tried, as well as he could, to settle difficulties. Then, why not send down that gentleman to this locality? I am satisfied that the oftener he goes down the faster the work will be carried out. I will put it to any man of common sense what the feeling of a man must be who proposed to build a house and directed it to be built in 1883, and then found that even the foundation of the house had not been laid down in 1887. I have no desire to be tedious or wearisome; but I wish to get an assurance from the right hon. Gentleman opposite that something will be done. Otherwise, I shall have to multiply the number of cases in which a similar delay has arisen. I am satisfied that I can mention at least 50; but I have no desire to go into them fully, because it would occupy too much of the valuable time of the Committee. Before I sit down, in order to show the delay that has occurred, I may mention that on the 14th of March last, and also in the preceding September, I asked a question as to—

> "Whether, in October, 1885, all the necessary notices were served in the Blarney district of the Cork Union upon the ratepayers and all whom it concerned; . . . whether all the other necessary preliminaries were duly executed for the erection of 13 labourers' dwellings in the said district, and if, notwithstanding the lapse of a year and a-half, nothing has been done towards the erection of those houses, whether the cabins in which these 13 applicants lived were condemned by the sanitary officer as unfit for habitation in October, 1885, and if it is true that since then no attempt has been made to improve those condemned dwellings, and whether some of those labourers have on several occasions gone before the Board of Guardians, and were told the Local Government Board blocked the way?"

Well, Sir, I got no answer to that question. I have, however, seen some of these cottages, and the picture of the unfortunate people dwelling in them, with a mass of green mouldy moss growing over the roof, and falling through into the interior, the roofs themselves almost falling in, and the walls and rough stones unmortared, through which the winds of Heaven whistle unhindered—the sight of these cabins, and the poor little children in rags, with very little to feed them upon, is enough to touch the heart not only of a Local Government Board Inspector, but even of Members of Her Majesty's Tory Administration. [*A laugh.*] This is a matter for deep consideration, and no matter for laughter. The evil lies in this, that the Local Government Board do not pay that attention to their business which they ought to pay, and these people are still compelled to occupy these dwellings, because the Government refuse to pay attention to their demands. I think the people of England will consider the conduct of the Government a burning injustice, which cries aloud for redress. They have shown their activity in regard to coercion, and it is high time that they paid attention to the Christian demands of a Christian people. If this matter is not taken up, we shall be obliged to call attention to it by moving the adjournment of the House, as has been done this evening in regard to another question. I trust that a Tory Government, who have always tried to identify themselves with the cause of the labourers, will endeavour, by some means, to remedy this injustice, and relieve themselves from the incubus of responsibility which lies upon them.

Mr. J. NOLAN (Louth, N.): I also rise to impress upon the Government the importance of carrying out the provisions of the Labourers' (Ireland) Act. It is, I think, most unfortunate that a matter of such grave importance should have to be brought before the House at the end of the Session. I cannot but believe that if hon. Gentlemen opposite had the case of the labourers of Ireland placed clearly and fearlessly before them, they would unite their voices with ours for the purpose of getting the Government to try to remedy the existing state of things. This question of the labourers in Ireland is not a question of to-day or yesterday. For 100 years, generation after generation, English Gentlemen of every shade of politics who have visited Ireland have brought before successive Governments the miserable and deplorable way in which the Irish labourers are housed. I do not intend to go back on the statements made by English writers from the time when the Bishop of Derry brought this question before the English public, down to the time when General Gordon spoke in striking terms of the Irish peasant labourer's position. As one of the Representatives of a constituency in which there are a large number of this class, I must say that from time to time since I have had the honour to represent that constituency, I have been appealed to, not only by the labourers themselves, but by friends in the district, to try to get the work of the Local Government Board expedited; but it would appear as if the officials at Dublin Castle cannot be induced to move in this matter with anything like speed. In the first place, it requires some time to get the Local Authority to act; the Board of Guardians have first to be set in motion; then, when the application is made to the Local Government Board, there is a long delay, and month after month passes before a reply is vouchsafed to the application. An Inspector is sent down, an inquiry is held on the spot, and, after the Inspector goes away, there is another long delay, after which a communication is sent to the Board of Guardians to say that a certain number of schemes have been rejected, owing to some trifling informalities in the schemes themselves, and, perhaps, that a few of the schemes have been approved. After another long delay, a Provisional Order is sent down, authorizing the Local Authority to proceed with the work of erecting the labourers' cottages. Now, that is the process which is being gone through over the length and breadth of Ireland, and it is a state of things for which the people of Ireland can find no remedy. It is said that the officials in Dublin Castle are doing their best in the matter. I venture to say that if these officials were sent down to live for one week in the cottages of these poor labourers, and were forced to live under the same conditions as the occupants, at the end of the week Dublin Castle would bestir itself, and it would not be necessary for the Irish Members to complain of the delay of the Local Government Board. I, for one, if I had it in my power, would give these gentlemen a taste of what they are measuring out to the labourers in Ireland. Now, what would be easier, seeing that there is some difficulty in carrying out this Act, than for the officials in Dublin connected with the Local Government Board to send down a simple set of instructions to the Board of Guardians as to what is necessary to be done in order to get the schemes passed, and, having done so, at once to take action on the application made by the Boards of Guardians? Either the authorities in Dublin Castle have a sufficient number of Inspectors to put the Act in force, or they have not. If they have a sufficient number, there is no excuse for the Local Government Board interposing the delay; if they have not a sufficient number of Inspectors, then there is no excuse for their not applying for sufficient money to appoint a sufficient number for a few months, or until such time as the claims which are sent in are disposed of. We are told that money cannot be spared out of the Treasury; but you can find plenty of money to spend in Egypt, and we are told that it is spent on behalf of the poor fellaheen. The position of the fellaheen in Egypt is bad enough, God knows; but I say the condition of the labourers in Ireland is a good deal worse, and that we are compelled both by humanity and the principles of economy to do what is necessary for them. No one having the feelings of a man in his breast can go into one of these cottages without feeling that people in a Christian and civilized country should not be forced to dwell in such houses; and on the ground of economy, I take it for granted, even upon that low ground, that it would pay the nation to house the labourers better. When the tramway system was started, it was found that it was more profitable to feed the horses well than to keep them on a starvation allowance; and so it will be found in the case of labourers, that a nation will get more advantage from them when they are taken care of. Let the Committee imagine the case of these men who have to work at all hours of the day and night, and in all seasons of the year, and at the end of their labour are forced to go into such houses as I shall presently describe. With reference to my own constituency, I find that so long ago as 1885, the labourers there made application to the Guardians to have the provisions of the Act put in force. In August, 1886, the inertia of the Board of Guardians was overcome; the schemes were sent forward to the Local Government Board, and in January, 1887, the Local Government Board sent down an Inspector, Mr. Connell, who spent between a week and a fortnight on the spot making inquiries, and it was February, 1887, before the Report reached the Guardians that a certain number of the schemes were approved by the Local Government Board. Now, I cannot understand how it was that the Local Government Board, having decided upon the adoption of a certain number of these schemes in February, 1887, should have only issued the Provisional Order to go on with the work in the month of May. The number of cottages for which application was made was 96, of these there were rejected 36, and 25 fell through for the want of some formality. So that only 35 out of the 96 received the final sanction of the Local Government Board. Now with regard to the condition of the labourers' houses in the Union. I have described a number of them before, and I shall only now trouble the Committee with a description of one or two of them.

THE CHAIRMAN: That would be to travel outside the Vote. The only question which can be discussed under this Vote is that of neglect on the part of the Local Government Board.

MR. J. NOLAN: I should have liked to give a description of the cottages; but as you consider it out of Order, Mr. Courtney, I will only add in concluding my remarks that I join with my Colleagues in saying that in the interest of these poor and oppressed people, there is nothing which I shall not do to push forward this movement, and no matter how long we may be compelled to sit here, or what steps we may be called on to take within the rules of the House, I, for one, shall persist in the object I have in view. I say this not because the labourers in my constituency are an important and influential body—the action I have taken in this matter is dictated simply by feelings of humanity. If the labourers had political power or influence, they would be in a different position from that which they are now placed in; it is because they are poor, ignorant and without influence that they occupy their present unfortunate position; and I say it is the duty of hon. Members on both sides of the House to see that justice is done in this matter.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): I need not say that I fully sympathize with the hon. Member for North Louth in his desire that the condition of the labourers should be improved. At the same time, I may remark that the condition of the cottages of the labourers in Ireland now is very different from what it was some years ago, although I do not, for one moment, say that it might not be improved. With regard to the time occupied in putting the Act in force, I wish to point out that it is not so much the result of the action of the Local Government Board as of the provisions of the Act of Parliament itself. Under that Act, representation has to be made, first, to the Sanitary Authority — the Sanitary Authorities are the Boards of Guardians—and these sometimes act with a knowledge of the Statute, and sometimes they do not. When they act at all, they frame a scheme which is placed before the Local Government Board in Dublin; but before they do that, they have to publish a number of advertisements to enable the land to be taken compulsorily. The matter having gone before the Local Government Board, they send down an Inspector, who, after examination on the spot, proceeds to hold an inquiry, and then makes a Report to the Local Government Board; then a Provisional Order is prepared adopting the scheme in whole or in part; then an opportunity, which is considerably availed of, is given to persons affected by the scheme to petition against it; that petition goes before the Privy Council, and their order is final. The Committee will see that a number of steps have to be taken, and it is obvious that a considerable time must necessarily be occupied by the successive stages of the business. The hon. Member for North Louth mentioned that the labourers in his district set to work in November, 1885, to influence the Board of Guardians; but the real cause of the delay was the Board of Guardians, who, apparently, did not act until the month of August, 1886, or nearly a year afterwards. Then in January, 1887, the Inspector of the Local Government Board went down and made inquiry, which could not have been done, as I think the hon. Gentleman said it was, before that, because of the time required by the advertising in the newspapers. The Provisional Order was made sometime in the month of May, as the hon. Member has pointed out; but with regard to that, I do not think there was any ground for imputing delay to the Local Government Board, because I find that 36 cottages were struck out altogether from the original scheme for 97, besides 25 that were also eliminated on the ground of informality, so that there were only 35 cottages to the good, so to speak, in the Order. It must be borne in mind that the Local Government Board has a very responsible duty to perform in these cases, and that one mistake may invalidate a whole plan. I can assure hon. Members below the Gangway opposite that the Local Government Board, and those concerned in the administration of the Act, are not all to blame for the course that they have taken. With regard to the Millstreet Union, referred to by the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner), it is obvious that the Guardians did not sufficiently consider beforehand the actual number of cottages which should have been applied for, because a number were struck out of the scheme by the Local Government Board. I do not know—nor did the hon. Member mention—when the Board of Guardians presented their scheme to the Local Government Board; but I am certain it was not presented in 1883. I believe it was much later. [An hon. MEMBER: In 1884.] When was the Provisional Order made? [Dr. TANNER: Early in 1886.] The hon. Member will see that there is great difficulty in dealing with the question of delay in the absence of dates, and that it is from no unwillingness on my part if I am unable to give him a satisfactory answer. It is the Sanitary Authority that is responsible for the work, and the moment they get their Order they can act; and therefore they, and no one else, are responsible for the subsequent delay. The same remarks apply to the other Union mentioned by the hon. Member. With reference to the point in connection with the Edenderry Union raised by the hon. Member for the Tullamore Division of King's County (Dr. Fox), I do not know the circumstances of the case, or whether they concern the Local Government Board or any of the officers whose salaries come under this Vote. I shall have to inquire into the matter, and see if there is any delay for which we are accountable, with a view to expediting the work if such is the case. I trust that explanation will be satisfactory to the hon. Member. Of course, hon. Gentlemen know well that when a general discussion of this kind is entered upon without specific Notice being given, it is impossible for anyone, however willing, to give a satisfactory answer to everyone; I trust, however, that hon. Gentlemen will recognize that I have tried to deal with the questions brought forward in a fair spirit.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I recognize the manner in which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland has looked on the very important question of labourers' cottages. We do not want to approach the consideration of this Vote in any polemical spirit; we merely want to point out the defects that are observable in the working of the Local Government Board, more especially in connection with the Labourers' Act. At the outset of my remarks, which will be brief, I wish to say that we in the South and West of Ireland have joined in recognizing that on the part of many Inspectors there is a praiseworthy desire to co-operate with the Sanitary Authorities in the matter of erecting labourers' cottages. But although this is true, in many cases there are exceptions which we want to bring before the Committee, and which can only be accounted for by the negligence of the Board. This is not very gross; but it is sufficiently grave in its character to call for the attention of Irish Members. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, in replying to my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner), took up the case of the Millstreet Union. Now, that involves a question of delay in connection with labourers' cottages from the blame for which the Local Government Board cannot possibly relieve themselves. As I understand the matter, it is that this scheme was applied for early in January, and that if the necessary representations had been sent in to the Local Government Board, the delay of close upon nine months would not have occurred before the Inspectors were sent down to report on the scheme. The effect of the delay has been that out of 108 cottages not one has been erected in the Union. The blame for this lies entirely on the Local Government Board, who did not send down their Inspectors to take the necessary steps in connection with the scheme for the erection of the cottages; and I believe that if there was delay on the part of the Board of Guardians, it is a delay for which the Local Government Board are largely responsible. This is one example of delay on the part of the Local Government Board. Another is that of the Cork Union, to which my hon. Friend also referred. The right hon. and learned Gentleman must bear in mind when he speaks of delay on the part of the Board of Guardians that the Act of 1883 was not largely availed of. The Guardians were not satisfied with that Act; but when the amending Act of 1885 came into force there was great activity shown throughout Ireland, with the exception of Ulster, for the erection of cottages under the Act. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was not in the House when I expressed full recognition of the fact that the Local Government Board had in connection with many schemes acted with a great deal of liberality and public spirit; but while that is so, I think it is certainly within our province to point out where the Local Government Board has failed to act with the necessary promptitude. There has been delay in the case of the Millstreet Union, and delay has also occurred in reference to the Cork Union. There was great delay with regard to the scheme set on foot by the Cork Board of Guardians, who were very anxious to have the cottages erected, and who could not, at any rate, be accused of want of knowledge of the locality nor of the various steps necessary to be taken. There is one other point that I have to refer to, and that is in connection with the Inspectors when they go round the various districts inquiring into schemes brought before them by the Local Authorities. I do not wish, on a Vote of this kind, to speak in a polemical spirit; but from my own knowledge and close observation, I say that on many occasions, even when the Sanitary Authority has approved the scheme, and the medical officer has certified that the cottages in the district are badly built and defective in point of accommodation, the Local Government Board Inspectors have refused to entertain the schemes. It is only reasonable that the Local Government Board should give directions to their Inspectors to treat these cases on their merits; to pay no heed to the fact whether a man is Boycotted or not; to divest their minds altogether of anything like political prejudices, and to take the schemes as they are presented to them. If they are satisfied that cottages should be built in a particular place, and are satisfied with the representations made to them, they ought not to pay the slightest attention to tittle-tattle, but to carry out the scheme. A Return has been presented of the various Unions in which schemes have been put forward. I am not clear on the point as to whether it was in answer to a Question, or in connection with some other public business, that the question of shorthand writing was raised in this House; I think it was in reply to a Question. It has been pointed out that enormous expense has been incurred in bringing down shorthand writers from Dublin to take notes of the proceedings before the Local Government Boards Inspector in connection with these schemes. The travelling expenses alone of the shorthand writers are very heavy. Of course, the expense of shorthand writing must be met from some quarter. At present we find it in the Estimates. All these expenses tend to make the cottages more costly. I find that in the Clontarf Union, which is in my constituency, 426 cottages were applied for, but only 132 have been erected out of 326 sanctioned. Now, the shorthand writers' expenses in the comparatively limited inquiry in Clontarf amounted to the large sum of £40 18*s*. 10*d*. I believe you could have got competent shorthand writers from the City of Cork, which is close to the Clontarf Union, for £10, or £15 at the outside. That would have been a considerable saving in the Estimates, and at the same time the business would have been done quite as well, if not better, because in places like Cork you can always get reporters of the highest order of ability most competent to do the work required in these inquiries. Besides, the shorthand writers naturally look jealously upon the fact that shorthand writers have been brought from long distances and at much greater expense, which need not have been the case. I do not know that there is any other matter in connection with the question of labourers' cottages which I wish to bring before the Committee. I should not like, as I have said before, to be regarded as indulging in any unfair or harsh criticism of the manner in which the Local Government Board of Ireland have acted in connection with this very important question of the erection of labourers' cottages. I believe that in many cases they have acted with great public spirit, and with anxiety to do their duty to carry out the schemes the Legislature intended when they passed the amending Act of 1885; but, at the same time, there are many occasions in which they have not so acted. There have been occasions in connection with some particular scheme such as I have enumerated—Millstreet and Cork—on which they have not so acted, and in which cases there has been an unaccountable delay, on account of which delay large numbers of labourers are still kept in occupation of these miserable hovels which are a disgrace to the fair soil of Ireland, and have long been a reproach to the civilization of the State ruling over the destinies of the people of Ireland. Having said this, I do not wish, generally speaking, to unduly blame the Local Government Board in this matter, because I know there are many Local Authorities which have been much to blame. We hope that when next we come to discuss the Estimates we may not find so many opportunities of criticizing so adversely the work of the Local Government Board in connection with one of the most useful measures that Parliament has ever passed.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I am sure it would be impossible to find fault with the tone of the hon. Member's remarks, which have been very fairly and frankly made. In his concluding sentence, he hoped that when next the Committee came to discuss the Estimates he and his hon. Friends would not have the same ground for criticizing the work done by the Local Government Board. I think that if he will look back to last year, he will find that there were probably more grounds for complaint than there are this year. I am sure, considering the spirit he has shown, the hon. Gentleman will join me in saying it is absolutely impossible that a great measure like the Labourers' Cottages Act, involving as it does so many conflicting interests, can be administered without a certain amount of friction and delay, some of which delay may be necessary, almost unavoidable, and some of which may be unnecessary. The present state of affairs is certainly better than the former. The best sign of this is that there are less appeals, and that there is certainly a greater disposition on all sides to view the matter in a frank, fair and reasonable manner, to recognize the fact that a labourer is not only worthy of his hire, but worthy of a home in which he can be lodged and housed like a Christian being. I am sure it is hardly necessary for me to add that the Government have every desire that this Act shall be administered in the spirit in which Parliament intended it should be. Now, there are one or two remarks of the hon. Gentleman in regard to which I should like to say a word. The hon. Gentleman desires a pledge from the Government that in all cases where objections have been raised to schemes, no question of what I may call politics will be allowed to enter into the minds of the Inspectors. I think he said the Inspectors should have no concern as to whether a man was Boycotted or not.

MR. FLYNN: I said whether the farms were Boycotted or not.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I would go a little beyond that. We are discussing this matter in a friendly and open and frank spirit, and I think the hon. Gentleman will allow that when the Bill was first brought before the House, I, then sitting on the Opposition Benches, supported the second reading. My sole fear was that the Act might be used for political purposes. When the Act became law it was undoubtedly, to a certain extent, used for political purposes. [MR. FLYNN dissented.] The hon. Gentleman shakes his head. I do not mean to say that it was used for political purposes on one side more than another, Party differences did unquestionably enter into the consideration. In some cases Nationalist Guardians were found in conflict with the Act, while in other cases the Guardians who were not Nationalists opposed schemes which, I think, they are now inclined to look upon with favour. With regard to the question of shorthand writing, I confess on looking through the account I was struck in exactly the same way as the hon. Gentleman. The shorthand writers' expenses seemed to me a rather extravagant item; indeed, they were altogether disproportionate to the other expenses. The hon. Gentleman has done well in calling the attention of the Committee to this matter. He complains that in certain cases Cork reporters have not been employed. I do not speak from personal experience; but I have always understood that shorthand writers were engaged from the nearest town; if they are not they certainly ought to be. Reference has also been made to the charges of the solicitors engaged in the carrying out the operations of the Act. Now, if hon. Gentlemen will examine the account they will see that in two Unions where a great deal of good work has been done the solicitors' costs are very small indeed, and that in Unions where little work has been done the solicitors' expenses are enormous. That is a matter in which the Government are not responsible, but in which the Guardians are solely responsible. The Government do whatever they can to restrict the incidental charges as much as possible. In conclusion, I must impress upon the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Flynn), and all Irish Members who are anxious, as I am, to see this Act carried out in the manner it ought to be, that the working of the Act must necessarily take time. The Government are certainly desirous of seeing the Acts properly administered; but, at the same time, administered with as little friction as possible.

Mr. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): I hope the Government will give us some information regarding the item for auditing. The total charge for salaries is £6,842, and of this £3,467 is taken for auditing. It appears to me that the charge is altogether disproportionate to the service rendered. I do not complain of proper salaries being paid to auditors; but I certainly think that the local rates should not be overcharged with auditing expenses.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): The right hon. and gallant Gentleman's (Colonel King-Harman's) speech was certainly couched in a tone which we are very happy to recognize and to reciprocate. There are some points, however, in which I think he is a little mistaken. He says he does not consider that the Local Government Board are to be blamed for the large expenses incurred in solicitors' costs where no work has been done. If there is anything in Ireland more painful than another to persons who have publicly mixed themselves up in local matters, it is the extravagant waste of public money in the administration of this Act, especially in districts where there is not a single thing to show for it. In many districts where solicitors, reporters, and proprietors of newspapers have received an enormous amount of money in pursuance of the proceedings under the Act not a stone has been laid. The intention of Parliament in passing the Act was that the money expended should go towards the employment of the labourers themselves in providing cottages for themselves. I think I could show the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman) that if the Local Government Board progressed during the past and present years at the rate he thinks they have, a great deal of the expenditure incurred would have been obviated. I maintain that while the old Act required that there should be three publications in two months, the Local Government Board did not exert themselves to communicate with the local Guardians. There have hitherto been two classes of Guardians, *ex officio* Guardians and elected Guardians. The *ex officio* Guardians, since they have lost their hold upon the Chair of the Board, and since they have found that they can no longer be the masters of the Board, have abstained from attending the Board meetings. They, of course, have the advantage of education and the advantage of being in nearer touch with the Legislature than the elected Guardians, and they can in many cases be useful if they wish to bestir themselves. The contrary, however, has been the case. They have abstained, as I say, from attending the meetings of the Guardians, and the Local

Government Board have also abstained from doing their duty. They did not acquaint the clerks of the Unions with their duties. They did not put before the Guardians in letter after letter, as they should have done, the necessity of complying with certain regulations. I am afraid, therefore, I cannot altogether agree with the right hon. and gallant Gentleman that the Local Government Board are free from blame in this matter. If hon. Gentlemen will look at the figures of the present Vote they will find an increase of £1,380 in law charges. Had I been present when this charge was reached I should certainly have challenged the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to give an explanation of this increase, and I should have been surprised if he had been able to show that any increase in value to the people had resulted from it. These law charges afford another instance of the intricacy of Irish government. I have been a witness of these things. I know a solicitor to a Board appointed in the time when landlords and agents had practically the Board in their hands. This man continued to be the solicitor to the Board even after the popular Guardians were elected, who, I am glad to say, have not taken any violent methods and removed the man for the sake of superseding him by a man agreeing with their own views. But what has happened? This solicitor, in his capacity of legal adviser to the Board, has come before the Board to show how they could best get labourers' cottages erected in their Union. This very solicitor has gone down next day to the next Union, and has opposed, in the interests of the local landlords, the erection of labourers' cottages. The solicitor to the Union to which the gentleman to whom I have referred went has returned the compliment in coming forward to oppose the erection of labourers' cottages in the adjoining Union. These solicitors are the representatives of the landlords. They get more from the landlords than they get from the Boards of Guardians, and solicitors, at best, are but human. There is more likelihood they will make their best efforts in the interests of those who pay them best, and they are the landlords. I fear that, however long I were to speak, I could not altogether adopt the tone and spirit of my hon Friend the Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn) There is one matter which, I think, may fairly be raised on this Vote; at any rate, I think I may just touch upon it. It is with reference to the duties required at the present time of rate collectors. I do not know whether I am in Order in referring to this matter; but if the right hon. and gallant Gentleman will indicate that I am not, I will not raise the point. The rate collectors of Ireland generally contract to do certain duties. Now, in many instances, owing to the depression of the time and to the reduced percentage they receive, their recompense has been diminished, while their duties have been increased. On account of the scarcity of money, these men have often to call half-a-dozen times for the rates, and they are now asked to do extra duty in connection with the services of the franchise notices. I have been very much surprised, after the series of Questions put to the late Government, and also to the present Government, that there has been no indication on the part of the Government that they will take this matter into consideration. No doubt, I shall be asked how I would pay the rate collectors for the extra duty. My answer would be that they should be paid out of the Consolidated Fund.

THE CHAIRMAN: The question does not come within this Vote at all. It is a matter of local power—it is not a matter under the control of the Local Government Board.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Will you allow me, Sir, to say that my reason in venturing to raise the question was that certain Unions in Ireland have declined to impose these extra duties on the rate collectors. I presume that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who is also President of the Irish Local Government Board, is responsible for the acts of the Local Government Board, and therefore that the action of the Local Government Board may be reviewed on the Vote for the right hon. Gentleman's salary. I do not see how the Local Government Board can direct these men to continue the performance of that extra duty without directing how they are to be paid. I am thankful to you, Sir, for indulging me so far, because I have virtually stated all I intended to state. I do not now expect an answer from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel King-Harman), as the matter does not come within the purview of the Vote; but I think the matter is one which may be fairly entertained by the Government with a view of lightening the duties of the rate collectors. Allow me to say, in conclusion, that while I do not wish to break the harmony of view which seems to exist with regard to the action of the Local Government Board, my experience gained in having attended, in my capacity as a newspaper man, Local Board meetings in Ireland, is that whenever the Local Government Board can find a flaw or irregularity in the action of Guardians, especially of elected Guardians, who will attend to delay the carrying out of schemes under the Labourers' Acts, they have only been too glad. I do not deny that there has been some improvement; but I wish to impress upon the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) that there is room for even greater improvement. There is vast room for improvement in every Department of the Government in Ireland, and in none more than in the Local Government Board.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Edward Harrington) has expressed surprise that in face of the questions asked in this House concerning the extra duty imposed upon the rate collectors, the Government have not indicated their intention of dealing with the matter. I should like to remind him that the only question asked about rate collectors and their duties during this Session was that asked a few days ago.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I rise for the purpose of asking my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) to emphasize his remarks by making a distinct Motion so that we can take a Division on this subject, which I hold to be one of very great importance to Ireland. It was once very truly said in this House that Ireland is the most deboarded country in the world. That expression was uttered by a great Irishman, Mr. Butt. Well, we have had a very interesting speech from the righ hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson). He told the Committee all about the Labourers' Acts; he described the routine it is necessary to go through in order to carry out a scheme for building labourers' cottages. I am sorry the Committee was not fuller at the time the right hon. and learned Gentleman spoke; because I feel that hon. Members would have been very much inclined to agree with the Representatives of Ireland as to the conflict between the manner in which laws are drafted in that country and the way in which they are carried out. But, Sir, if we have had the "laws delays" of the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson), we have "the insolence of Office" of those who carry out or administer law in Ireland. Certainly those who administer the law under the direction of the Local Government Board did all in their power by red tapism, by insolence, and by delay to frustrate the intention of Parliament. It is well known how this House laboured hard in the years 1881, 1882, and 1883 to pass the Irish Labourers' Act. We all know the efforts made since to mend that Act. I believe there have been two Acts of Parliament to amend the original Labourers' Act. At last, the Act was got into a fair shape. The Board of Guardians in Ireland were entrusted with the carrying out of the Act, and notwithstanding all that the Attorney General (Mr. Gibson) says, notwithstanding all that he has hinted at, rather than what he has said, regarding the action of the Poor Law Guardians in Ireland, I maintain the Act has had fair play so far as the action of the tenant farmers of Ireland who mainly compose the Poor Law Boards could give it fair play. But, Sir, the Boards of Guardians in Ireland are composed of two distinct classes. You have the tenant farmers who are the representatives of the people, and you have the *ex officio* Guardians who are appointed according to their property. The *ex officio* Guardians help the tenant farmers to make the mistakes that have been alluded to by the Attorney General.

The CHAIRMAN: Several times I have had occasion to point out that the only way in which this matter can be discussed is with reference to the action of the Local Government Board, and not with reference to the action of the Boards of Guardians.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I am coming to that, Sir. I believe it was the duty of the Local Government Board to set the Poor Law Guardians right if they were making mistakes. The Inspectors who went down to the Unions from time to time should, instead of hindering and preventing the erection of cottages, have instructed the Boards of Guardians as to the manner in which they were to perform their duties. There have been great objections put in the way of carrying out this Act of Parliament. We have to look to the Government for the administration of the Act; but what will the value of this discussion be if it is to go no further than the plausable speeches to which we have listened from the Government Benches. Frankly, we have brought before the notice of the House the maladministration in Ireland of the Acts of Parliament. We have always been met by plausable speeches from Members of the Government, but not one step has been taken to rectify the defect in the administration of which we complain. This is what we protest against. We have had a speech to-night from the Attorney General for Ireland of which no person can complain. We have had a speech from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) of which no one can complain. The Government are full of the best intentions, but it is necessary to emphasize our protest against their neglect by every means in our power. This is the only time we have of bringing our grievances before the country; it is the only way in which we can make the Government alive to their duties; it is the only means we have of showing our constituents that we are watching over their interests, and therefore I protest against being put off with the mild and plausable speeches which have been delivered by Members of the Government to-night. I ask my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) who opened this discussion, who pointed out the defects in the Poor Law system of Ireland, who pointed out and clearly proved that the Local Government Board in Ireland threw obstacles in the way of a proper administration of a beneficent Act of Parliament, an Act of Parliament in the passing of which the two sides joined, an Act of Parliament which was passed by the unanimous decision of the House, and with as little opposition as possible from anybody. I admit that some of the best provisions, the best Amendments that were proposed to the Bill, were objected to, and that if they had been passed there would have been no need for this discussion to-night. I hope my hon. Friend (Dr. Tanner) will accept my suggestion—namely, to make such a Motion that we can go to a Division. The people of Ireland will thus see that we are alive to our duties, and the Government will understand that we are not to be put off with plausable speeches, but that we demand that they shall put their expressed good intentions into effect.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I think this is a good time to bring before the attention of the Committee a matter in which 10 or 15 Unions in Ireland are greatly concerned. Of course the Chief Secretary and the Parliamentary Under Secretary are perfectly aware that this year the Local Government Board have ordered the levy of the last instalment of the Seed Rate. I believe that 94 per cent or 95 per cent of the Potato Loan has been paid off, which everyone will agree is a very satisfactory state of affairs. In some well-to-do Unions, the whole of the loan has been paid off; but there is a balance of 6 per cent or 7 per cent unpaid, and the Local Government Board have ordered that the whole of this amount should be raised in the current year. I brought this subject before the House in the short Session we had last autumn.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I think I told the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan) last autumn that the subject could not be introduced.

Colonel NOLAN: But since then the Local Government Board have taken action. Of course, if you rule that the subject cannot be referred to, I will not refer to it; but the Local Government Board have issued an order for the levying of the rate this year. And what I want to do is to impress upon them the desirability of reconsidering their decision on account of the exceptional circumstances of the year.

The CHAIRMAN: It is out of Order to refer to the subject this year for precisely the same reasons as it was out of Order to refer to it last year.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.): There is a matter in connection with this Vote very worthy of the attention of the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) as President of the Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman has introduced a Bill called the Distressed Unions (Ireland) Bill, and the mere introduction of that measure has had the effect of certain Banking Companies in Ireland putting pressure upon various Unions throughout the country. The Union I have the honour to be connected with is greatly affected. The reason I wish to connect this with the Local Government Board is, that we find in former years the National Bank allowed the Limerick Union to have a considerable overdraft; but now, owing, no doubt, to the introduction of the Distressed Unions Bill, the National Bank is pressing the Limerick Union. We have made application to the Local Government Board to allow us to pay off our present treasurer and to appoint a treasurer who will honour our cheques to a considerable amount; we were met with a distinct refusal. This is a matter of considerable importance, because it is clearly the duty, and it is also to be the privilege, of any Union to change its treasurer at any time. Yet we are met in this case by the refusal of the Local Government Board to permit us to make this change. I wish to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) whether if we can find in Ireland another Banking Company who are willing to take over the account of the National Bank, to pay off the National Bank, and to allow the Limerick Union to draw what is sufficient to carry on the work of the Union, the Local Government Board will permit us to change our treasurer in the manner I have indicated.

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.): Before the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. Balfour) replies, I should like to ask what he intends to do with the Distressed Unions Bill? The right hon. Gentleman must know the strong feeling there is on these Benches.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman can ask a question, but cannot make a speech respecting the Bill in question.

Mr. DEASY: I will raise the point in a different way. Under this Vote I shall impugn the conduct of the Local Government Board in not using the power they possess to deal with certain Boards of Guardians in the West of Ireland. I complain that the Local Government Board have, through their Inspector, permitted Boards of Guardians in Westport and other Distressed Unions to misuse, if they have, as alleged, the powers granted by this House under the Bill passed last year to distribute a sum of money amongst the poor people within their Unions. An inquiry was held under the auspices of the Local Government Board into the distribution of this money in Westport and other places during the last three or four months. The result of this inquiry is, I confess, not satisfactory to me, and not satisfactory to anyone else who has had anything to do with this particular district. It must be said in extenuation of the conduct of these Guardians that the Boards are not constituted on a popular basis. I have to complain of a Memorandum which was submitted to this House, setting forth some of the salient features of the Report made by the Local Government Inspector. That Memorandum entirely overstated the true facts of the case, and anyone reading it would imagine that the Guardians in these particular districts had been guilty of nothing less than fraud, and a little short of wholesale robbery. I frankly admit that these Guardians have not done their duty as well as they ought to have done; but, at the same time, it must be recollected that when hundreds of people are on the verge of starvation, and when the machinery at the disposal of the Guardians for grappling with this starvation is inadequate, irregularity is almost inevitable. The Local Government Inspector took part in the proceedings, and, as a matter of fact, he was present at the meetings of the Board at which the irregularity occurred. Why did not the Local Government Inspector report to his Board that the business of the Union was not being transacted as it ought to have been, and why did not the Local Government Board step in and give directions as to the mode in which the business under the Act should be carried out? Why did the Board permit the Guardians to run into arrear as they have done? It is perfectly true that the rates in the district are extremely high. It is perfectly true that, to some extent, the Guardians are to blame; but it is also true that the Local Government Board and their Inspectors are primarily responsible for the present state of affairs which exists in the West of Ireland and other districts. I ask the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. A. J. Balfour) what he intends to do with these Unions; whether he intends to compel the Board, of which he is the head, to exercise the power given to it by Parliament more than 40 years, of suppressing the present Boards of Guardians and appointing Vice Guardians? I think that is a very strong and objectionable step. I do not think it is absolutely necessary; but it is preferable to the method the Local Government Board propose to adopt in dealing with the Distressed Unions. The Local Government Board can allow the Board of Guardians to carry on their work as best they can, possibly enabling them by giving them loans at no interest, to carry it on, or they can appoint Vice Guardians which will take up the business and the liabilities of the present Board, and will conduct the proceedings as if the Guardians were not in existence. The latter course is not one which commends itself to me; but, of two evils, I choose the lesser. I now ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, having regard to the opposition which the Distressed Unions Bill is likely to receive on these Benches, he will compel the Board of which he is nominally the head, to adopt the course which for the last 45 years the Local Government Board have adopted throughout Ireland, and not have recourse to the extraordinary and unnecessary measure of altering the present law which he has been telling us for the last three or four weeks, and which is necessary in order to prevent the poor people of the West of Ireland dying of starvation. I think that the right hon. Gentleman, in the interest of Public Business, would do well to adopt the suggestion I have made.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Deasy) asks me what course I propose to pursue with regard to the Distressed Unions Bill? The course the Government desire to pursue was adequately explained to the House the other day. Owing to the opposition offered by some of the Friends and Colleagues of the hon. Gentleman this Bill has not very much chance of passing this Session. The hon. Gentleman asks me whether, if I cannot pass the Bill, I will appoint Vice Guardians. Now, in the earlier part of the debate this evening, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) urged me to reinstate the elected Guardians in New Ross, and to dispossess the Vice Guardians—[Mr. DEASY: For different reasons.]—I told the hon. and learned Member I was anxious on an early day to reinstate the elected Guardians. I desire to retain all the privileges of local self-government which exists in Ireland as they exist in England, with regard to Poor Law matters, and therefore I cannot promise to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Deasy)—namely, to appoint Vice Guardians to deal with the existing condition of things in the Unions in the West of Ireland. I grant that the state of affairs in these Unions is very disastreus; but to what is it due? It is due entirely to the wretched mismanagement of public funds by the Boards of Guardians of those Unions. The hon. Gentleman suggests, as an easy way of getting over the difficulty, that the English taxpayer should come to the relief of these Boards of Guardians. I do not feel at all disposed to ask the British taxpayer to supply funds for the relief of distress in Ireland, except under conditions which would render the repetition of the evils which have occurred impossible. I do not know I can add anything to what I have said. The proposal of the Government is clearly before the House, and if the hon. Gentleman desires that anything should be done, he should do his best to facilitate the passing of the measure I have introduced.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.): I desire to ask for an explanation from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) as to why a letter sent by a returning officer of the Bantry Union to the Secretary of the Local Government Board was suppressed? The letter was in reply to a telegram sent by the Secretary of the Local Government Board in reference to a recent election in the Union.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I think that if the hon. Gentleman had wished to call attention to this matter, it would have been better to have done so in the form of a Question. I remember I answered a Question on this subject some time ago. I did so to the best of my ability upon the information I received. If the hon. Gentleman had a copy of the letter in question, it would have been as well if he had supplied me with it.

MR. GILHOOLY: I had not the letter at the time I asked the Question, but I have since received one from the returning officer. I furnished the Chief Secretary with a copy of it, and asked him for an explanation; but he treated the matter with complete indifference, if not with contempt. I now ask the right hon. Gentleman for an explanation.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I assure the hon. Gentleman I have never had the least intention to be discourteous to him, or to neglect any communication he made to me. I do not recollect the precise circumstances to which he alludes; but if he will put a Question upon the Paper on the subject, I will do my best to give him as satisfactory an answer as I can.

Mr. GILHOOLY: I complained at the time of the action of the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) in the matter.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I assure the hon. Gentleman that I never saw or heard of the letter.

Mr. GILHOOLY: You answered the Question, and not the Chief Secretary. Now, in connection with this Vote, I have to complain of the action of the gentleman who audits the accounts of the Bantry Union. As I understand the law, it is that no work costing more than £20 can be done for the Union without there being a contract. The Chairman of the Bantry Union, aided by a number of *ex officio* Guardians who usually come in to do a job when the Chairman summons them, gave out work costing £61 without a contract. In my opinion, this was quite illegal and irregular, and the gentleman who audits the accounts at the Bantry Union passed the matter. I wish to know from the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) or from the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) whether the auditor acted properly and legally in so doing? I wish also to refer to the manner in which the Local Government Board treat Minutes of some Unions. The Chairman of the Bantry Union has refused to accept Resolutions in regard to which he could have his will. The Local Government Board never took notice of these irregularities, unless some member of the Boards of Guardians wrote to them. I hold, Mr. Courtney, that the Local Government Board ought to see that Resolutions referring to the business of the Board of Guardians is not refused by the Chairman. It is the duty of the Local Government Board to remonstrate with Chairmen of Unions, and instruct them as to their duties. There is another matter in connection with the Bantry Union to which I have to call attention. The doctor of the Bantry Dispensary holds the keys of the place, and keeps the Minute Book locked up. On some occasions, the members of the Dispensary Committee have been inconvenienced by the doctor being absent, and neglecting to leave the key in some convenient place, in order that the Committee might gain access to the Dispensary in which to hold their meetings. A communication was sent to the Local Government Board upon this subject, but they took no notice whatever of it.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman asked me whether the auditor has acted legally in passing certain expenses connected with the Bantry Union? I presume that the auditor acted illegally, if he broke the law.

Mr. GILHOOLY: I ask for the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot give an opinion off-hand. The hon. Gentleman also asked me whether the Local Government Board ought to pass Minutes of the Poor Law Guardians which are not countersigned by the Chairman.

Mr. GILHOOLY: What I asked was whether it was not the duty of the Local Government Board, when they saw that Resolutions were refused by the Chairman, to remonstrate with him and acquaint him with his duties.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.): I regret to have to recur to a matter which I brought under the notice of the Committee a few moments ago; but it seems to me a matter of very great importance. The Limerick Union Banking Account is at the present moment something like £10,000 overdrawn. There is a large amount of rates due for which the Guardians are unwilling to press the ratepayers unduly in consequence of the scarcity of money in Ireland at the present time. The Union is in a position to get another Banking Company to take over the account of the Leitrim Union from the National Bank, and to advance all the money necessary to keep the Union going. I want to know how it is that the Local Government Board will not give the

Limerick Board of Guardians power to change their treasurer? In former years, we were obliged to make remonstrances to the Local Government Board in regard to the way which we were treated by the National Bank, which is treasurer of the Union. I think it is clear that the Board of Guardians themselves are the proper persons to judge who they will have for their treasurer, and I now ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) whether he is disposed to allow the Board of Guardians to change their treasurer, on the understanding that the new treasurer will pay the National Bank all the amount due to them, and that the Union shall keep their account with the new Bank? If the Local Government Board withhold their permission, I can assure them that the Limerick Board of Guardians will cease to lodge any money with the National Bank, and that will be a very serious matter. It is absurd that we should be compelled to retain a treasurer from whom we cannot get the facilities we require.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Perhaps I had better deal with this question at once. I am sorry to say that the Limerick Union has very largely overdrawn its account. I am afraid that is due to *laches* on the part of the Board of Guardians themselves. [MR. W. ABRAHAM: No, no!] Yes, the Union is a rich one. The rate made in March last was calculated to produce £31,500. Only £7,800 of that was collected up to the end of June, leaving £23,000 outstanding. It is clear, from the fact that such an amount of rate is outstanding, that there has been great neglect on the part of the collectors. I am now asked that the Union should be allowed to transfer its account to a treasurer who will lend them what they want. It seems to me, speaking without any full knowledge of the particular circumstances and considerations which have influenced the Boards of Guardians in desiring to make a change of treasurer, that the change is one which ought to be made with great caution. I am bound to say that, so far as I am able to form an opinion, the difficulties in which the Limerick Guardians find themselves are chiefly of their own creation.

MR. W. ABRAHAM: The right hon. Gentleman seems to ignore the fact that every effort has been made on the part of the Board of Guardians, through their collectors, to get in the rate. Surely, the Chief Secretary will admit that in such a year as this has been the Guardians ought to give every possible latitude to the over-burdened taxpayers. When the National Bank, which, in former years, allowed Boards of Guardians to overdraw their accounts more than at present, are putting the screw on a Board, and when another Joint Stock Bank is willing to relieve that Board, I think they ought to be allowed to deal with that Bank. The National Bank has sometimes £15,000 to the credit of the Guardians, yet now that they are overdrawn, they are coolly told that if they wanted money they must put more pressure on the ratepayers. The Guardians would not do that, and he had to complain on behalf of the Limerick Board of Guardians that in the management of their affairs they got very little assistance from the Local Government Board at any time, and now that they come to ask this favour—when they come to ask that they might be allowed to transfer their business from the National Bank to another Bank, so as to get the accommodation they required—they received no assistance or advice in devising a means by which they could get rid of their treasurer.

DR. TANNER: Might I point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, with reference to this very subject which has been so well put by my hon. Friend the Member for Limerick (Mr. W. Abraham), that practically the same state of affairs was in existence in the Macroom Union about four or five months ago; but in consequence of the strong attitude taken by the Boards of Guardians, because the National Bank would not allow them to overdraw, and another Bank—namely, the Munster and Leinster Bank—offering them the necessary accommodation, the difficulty was got over. After remonstrating on several occasions with the right hon. Gentleman, they finally got the matter squared, the National Bank gave the necessary advances, and everything was put right. The same thing could easily take place in connection with the Limerick Union, if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary would only give his sanction to the transaction. The right hon. Gentleman knew that the Limerick Union was a rich Union, but the Macroom Union was not a rich one, not nearly as rich as the Limerick one. When they were able to settle the difficulty which existed in a poor Union in the early months of this year, I do not see why, if the right hon. Gentleman seriously took the business of his Office into his own hands, and went into these local matters personally, and put the screw on his subordinates, the difficulties in connection with this rich Union should not cease at once. If the right hon. Gentleman would do this, the consequence would be that he would have a much more easy time of it than he has. He would have in every sense an easier position, and every one would be more satisfied, notwithstanding his very many shortcomings.

Mr. GILHOOLY: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will answer the question put to him. Will he inquire into the action of the creditors of the Bantry Union, and into the action of the dispensary doctor in keeping the account book locked up, and refusing to allow members of the Board of Guardians access to it? Will he also inquire as to the action of the Local Government Board in regard to the resolutions passed by the Bantry Guardians?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Gentleman will do me the honour to communicate with me as to the various questions he has raised, I will take measures to have them inquired into.

Mr. GILHOOLY: I have done the right hon. Gentleman that honour before he asked me.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): The question of the Distressed Unions Bill, which was raised by the hon. Member for West Mayo (Mr. Deasy), and replied to by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, requires, I think, little more discussion on this Vote, which will be the only opportunity we shall have of discussing it, unless the Bill at present before the House proceeds further. The right hon. Gentleman drew a comparison between the case of New Ross and the case of the Western Unions. He said that the hon. and learned Member for Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) had called upon them to replace the Vice Guardians by elected Guardians in New Ross; but there is no parallel between the two cases. The necessity which arises in the one case is totally different from that which arises in the other. The right hon. Gentleman states the reason why nothing has been done in the case of the Distressed Unions Bill, and says it is owing to the opposition of Members on this side of the House. I regret that this Bill has been opposed; but I would point out that the opposition is not on account of the action of the Government, who consider it necessary to do something in the matter. The Irish Members themselves think that special legislation is required; but the objection they take to the Bill is on account of its form, and from that point of view they hold it to be objectionable in many respects. It is objectionable primarily from the point of view that it proposes to enable the Commissioners whom the right hon. Gentleman wishes to appoint——

The CHAIRMAN: It is out of Order to discuss this particular Bill. All that can be discussed is the action of the Local Government Board.

Mr. MURPHY: I am afraid I have perhaps wandered somewhat beyond the limits I am entitled to walk within under the Vote; but I desired to explain to the right hon. Gentleman that our objection to the Bill was *bonâ fide*—that it was not for the necessity of doing something; but to the form in which the right hon. Gentleman proposed to do it. I have some Amendments to the Bill on the Paper; but as I am precluded from going into the details of the Bill itself I will not say any more on the question. If the right hon. Gentleman would introduce a measure of a practical and useful kind, enabling the Treasury to help these Unions, and if he would strike out the objectionable clauses, there would be no opposition on this side. A very bad state of things exists in the Unions to which this Bill would apply. The right hon. Gentleman attributes it to the Guardians themselves; but I attribute it to the way in which the money was advanced by the Local Government Board of Ireland—that is to say, to it having been advanced without the Local Government Board assuming any control of its administration. We know that these districts clamoured for money, and it was very natural that they should do so; but there can be no moral doubt that a system of advancing money without retaining control over its administration is an extremely bad one. The Local Government Board have not exercised the control and supervision over the administration and distribution of the money which they ought to have done. The present condition of the district arises from that cause. On the part of my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo, who has put down a Notice against this Bill, I wish to point out that it is not for the purpose of preventing the Government from introducing a measure that will deal with this matter that he has taken this course. The objection taken is simply to the form of the Bill.

MR. MAHONY (Meath, N.): I do not think the Chief Secretary fully appreciates the difficulties under which the Guardians in those Unions laboured at the time this money was advanced by this House. There was very great and acute distress in those districts when this money was advanced. I know that for a fact, because I was in the district serving under another Commission at the time——

THE CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the hon. Member that the question to be discussed is the action and power of the Local Government Board.

MR. MAHONY: That is precisely what I am going to deal with. I am going to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that he did not give credit to the Board of Guardians for the difficulties under which they laboured; and I am going to proceed then to point out that, in a great measure, the Local Government Board, and not the Guardians, are to blame for the mess into which these Unions have got. There was at this time very great distress existing in those Unions. There was undoubtedly very grave danger of death from starvation. These Unions had been asking the Government for relief sometime, when suddenly, very suddenly, the Government granted them assistance to the extent of £20,000; and I think I am correct in stating that they were actually authorized to commence this system of works for outdoor relief by telegrams. The Guardians finally received a telegram saying that £20,000 was at their disposal. The Local Government Board had the power of dividing that £20,000 between the various Unions. They did not intimate to each Union how much money would be at their disposal. They went on working in the dark for some weeks; and it was after the damage had been done—after the irregularities had occurred—that an Inspector was sent down, and called their attention to the irregularities. Nearly all the damage had been done before their attention was called to it; and I therefore say that there is a great deal of excuse to be made for those Bodies, who were suddenly called in to perform duties of a totally new character. There is one other point I wish to bring under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman, and that is this, that at a trying time, when the Boards of Guardians were being taxed to the uttermost of their power, the *ex officio* Guardians, to a man, absented themselves, and did not attend a single meeting, though only a short time before they had been practically the managers of those Unions. Their conduct has been commented upon very strongly in the Commission appointed to inquire into the state of those Unions; and when the Chief Secretary gets up and finds fault with the elected Guardians, I think he must let a share of his wrath fall on the heads of the *ex officios*. I think, also, that the Local Government Board are in some measure to blame in the course they pursued. They gave no previous directions to the Board of Guardians as to how they were to proceed in administering the Act. They gave no idea whatever as to the amount of money which should be allocated to each Union.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member has asked me two questions, and I will answer him in very few words. He says the Local Government Board, when they sent the message to the Unions to spend the money, did not accompany it with instructions as to how it was to be spent. But that is not the case, and the Local Government Board cannot be held to blame in any respects. The hon. Member went on to attack the *ex officio* Guardians, declaring that they might have attended the meetings much better than they did. Well, I grant that; but I would point out, at the same time, that the life of *ex officio* Guardians has not been made very pleasant to them during the last few years by the elected Guardians. The responsibility for the condition of things at present existing clearly lies with the elected Guardians.

Mr. MAHONY: As a member of a Board of Guardians, and as an *ex officio* member, I am bound to say that the statement the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has just made is a most uncalled-for statement. I would tell him what my experience has been in connection with the Listowel Board of Guardians—a Board which Gentlemen of the right hon. Member's opinions declare to be one of the worst Boards of Guardians in Ireland. I do not think that the *ex officio* Guardians who have attended that Board have ever met anything but a most courteous reception at the hands of the elected Guardians, except when they went out of their way to introduce political matter, and matters upon which the Guardians could not agree. When they flew in the face of the elected Guardians, I dare say they got tit for tat. But I am bound to say that in that Board of Guardians I have always noticed that the *ex officio* members were treated with the greatest respect; and, more than that, during the first year I attended regularly on that Board, I was opposed to the elected Guardians. I acted almost universally with the *ex officio* Guardians, and in opposition to the elected Guardians, and I am bound to say I was always treated in a most considerate and most kind manner by my opponents.

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I merely rise for the purpose of correcting a misapprehension on the mind of the right hon. Gentleman as to what I said with regard to the appointment of Vice Guardians. I did not advocate the appointment of Vice Guardians, except against the plan of the Local Government Board. I maintain that some steps will have to be taken by the Government, and that, whatever their plan is, it will have to include the granting of money to the present Boards of Guardians, which they can spend in order to get over the coming winter. I do not say that it will be necessary to hand money over to the Vice Guardians also. I think it will be necessary to do that in any case. A most important question—and I shall only deal with it for a few moments—has just been raised. Hon. Gentlemen who have been attending to the duties of the Cork Guardians must know the difficulties that the Cork Board has had from time to time with regard to money matters. More than once when I was on the Board, almost the entire Board passed resolutions asking the Local Government Board to allow them to change their treasurer, and to allow them to deal with a bank which would be likely to treat them fairly. The Local Government Board refused them permission to go to the Bank of Ireland, in place of the National Bank, although the Bank of Ireland has a Government grant, and although no bank can be more solvent. I do not think there would be likely to be any disposition on the part of the Cork Guardians or the Limerick Guardians to invest the money of the ratepayers to the amount of some £50,000 a-year in any Joint Stock Bank that was not perfectly solvent. I think that in this matter the Guardians may be perfectly trusted always to exercise a proper discretion. I think it extremely hard on those Boards that the Local Government Board will not allow them to change their treasurer. With regard to the question of auditors which has been discussed, I would throw out a suggestion —although I do not expect an answer from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. The Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland seems to take great interest in the administration of Irish affairs, and I would ask him to give his earliest attention to one or two points I would raise, particularly as to administration. I have referred to the question of the treasurers, and I would ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to look into the matter, and consider the observations of the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. W. Abraham), the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner), and myself. He will find, if he will only consult the Local Government Board officers themselves, that there has been the utmost dissatisfaction upon these matters amongst the officials. But the point upon which I now wish to speak is this—I think the money spent upon the auditors is thrown away. These men do nothing. They go over from one end of the country to the other; they spend pleasant days chatting with the clerks and with some members of the

Boards. They know nothing about the condition of the Union; they make no inquiries as to whether items are legal or illegal, and the result is, that thousands of pounds are illegally paid under their very noses. The only thing they can do is to come down on the unfortunate Nationalist Guardians if they have taken it into their heads to sign for £1 a-week for an evicted tenant, or something of that kind. I have been fined in that way, but I have never paid the fine, and the auditor who has come down has never inquired as to whether I have paid it or not. He has clearly neglected his duty in not making such an inquiry, and not insisting upon my paying the money. Of course, it would be useless if he did insist, because I should not pay it; but still I think it is his duty to insist. I have been fined £2, and I think this official is to blame for not endeavouring to get the money from me. I say that the Local Government Board, in regard to this question of granting relief, should give a discretion to the Guardians. They give us power to give relief. They have no right to tell us—"You may give 12*s.* 6*d.* a-week, but no more." A pound a-week is not too much for a family thrown on the roadside by the landlord, with no provision for them except the workhouse—which provision, if it were resorted to, would be infinitely more expensive to the ratepayers than the outdoor relief the Guardians would prefer to give. I would ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant to consider these matters. There is another matter about which there is great dissatisfaction—namely, the way in which the National School Teachers are treated by the Local Government Board. The Local Government Board have power to sanction, or refuse to sanction, the salaries granted by the Boards of Guardians to these teachers. In no case does a salary exceed £80 a-year, and I would ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to consider whether the Guardians should not be allowed to exercise their discretion in this matter also. I hope that next year we shall find that during the coming winter the Boards of Guardians will have found their discretion enlarged on these points, owing to the action of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman.

MR. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): The remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary as to the manner in which the lives of the *ex officio* Guardians are made unpleasant by the elected Guardians, are remarks of a thoughtless character, and tend to render discussions in this House heated and longer than they otherwise would be. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that the facts are just the reverse of those stated by him. The question of the treasurers to the Boards of Guardians has been discussed on the Benches opposite, and on these Benches. A difficulty has arisen recently of obtaining advances from some of the treasurers of the Unions in Ireland, and I believe that it is in a great measure due to the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman, and the method in which he proposed to deal with the accumulated debts of the Western Unions. I am not, however, entitled to discuss the form of that Bill. Perhaps I might be allowed to suggest some means for meeting the case of the Western Unions, which would, to some extent, be accepted on this side of the House. I would, in the first place, suggest that as there is no bankruptcy in these districts, the Guardians should have time, when they would be able to pay all their debts. We think that money should be advanced to Unions temporarily distressed. It would not be reasonable to give entire control of the money to the Guardians; but whilst keeping the control in their own hands to some extent, the Local Government Board should provide for some combination of elected Guardians and representatives of the Local Government Board. Such joint Board would, I think, be able to get the Western Unions out of their difficulties. At any rate, I would call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to that proposition, and if he will consider it I should like to know what view he forms on the subject.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I am very sorry to stand between the Committee and this Vote, and as I very rarely trouble the House I think the Committee will forgive me if I stand up for a few moments to join my protest to those which have already fallen from this side of the Committee against the administration of the Local Government Board in Ireland. From my own personal knowledge, in my own constituency in

Ireland, the records of the Local Government Board are bristling with scandals and injustice. The Local Government Board is not in touch with the people. The officials of that Board have no sympathy with the people, nor any sympathy with their sufferings. The Local Government Board is part and parcel of the system which we are determined to break down. I desire to join my Colleague in the representation of West Mayo (Mr. Deasy) in expressing a hope that even before we get some measure of Home Rule from this Parliament, you will adopt some method by which you will allow the auditors of the Local Government Board to do justice to the acts of the Boards in Ireland. Take my own constituency—the constituency of North Mayo. When last Session the distressed Unions were being discussed in this House, I suggested that the Ballina Union should be inserted in the Schedule. The House refused to do that; and, indeed, Sir, as events have gone, I am very glad that the Ballina Union was not inserted, and the people of North Mayo, I dare say, are themselves delighted that they were not put in. But, as a matter of fact, two other Unions — namely, those of Swineford and Belmullet, were permitted to be scheduled; and I remember I said at the time that no two Unions could be pointed out where there was greater distress and poverty than in those. I stated—and I think the House agreed with me—that this being so, there must necessarily have been a large amount of suffering in the Ballina Union as well. What was the result? As the hon. Member for West Mayo has pointed out, the result of this distress was that the Boards of Guardians gave power of making grants for four weeks of a larger amount than they can usually offer. The Ballina Union, in several cases, granted—say, to Edward Gallagher with six children, to Martin Garrette with a wife and seven children, and four or five others with families larger or smaller—a larger amount of money than is usually distributed. The Local Government Auditor went down to the Ballina Union, and, without acting upon principle or upon any definite system at all, disallowed half the grants that had been made by the Ballina Union in good faith, and because they were believed to be absolutely necessary for the lives of those distressed people. The auditor disallowed half the grants which had been made; and what I protest against is this—that in Ireland this auditor is absolutely autocratic. In the case I refer to the Ballina Union made a *bonâ fide* grant. Knowing the circumstances of the poor people they had to deal with, they made a grant which they believed to be absolutely necessary; and this auditor, who, as has been pointed out, merely goes down to a Union, spends a pleasant day with the clerk, and merely puts his initials to the accounts in the book and goes away—this gentleman, on his own authority, and without the slightest knowledge of the locality, and without having sympathy with the people, disallowed the grant. The result is that one of the most respectable merchants in Ballina, the Vice Chairman of the Board of Guardians, finds himself surcharged to the extent of £12. This gentleman is called upon to pay this amount for merely acting as Chairman to the Board of Guardians, a Board consisting of Conservatives as well as of Nationalists. No regard was paid to the fact that the Guardians, feeling that the amount that was granted was required for the sustenance of the poor people of the Union, made it freely and unanimously. We have no appeal against the decision of this auditor. You have an appeal against the decision of the Local Government Board Inspector in England; but we have none in Ireland, we have no remedy whatever, except to stand up in this House and make our complaints. But that, as the Committee is well aware, is of very little use, particularly so far on in the Session. But we who have the interests of our people at heart shall, whatever the result may be, continue to rise in this House and make the most earnest protests we can against the evils of the present system. I have now only to say that, so far as we can do, we are resolved inside this House, and outside, to pursue a policy which will result in the administration of Ireland being re-organized from top to bottom; and I certainly join my Colleagues on these Benches in protesting against the action of the Local Government Board in Ireland for the past 12 months.

Dr. TANNER: Might I finally ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will do anything in connection with the point which I have had the honour of bringing before him, and that is in connection with the working of the Labourers' Act? I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it would not be feasible, in connection with the working of this Act, and also in connection with the system of inspection, seeing that the officers who carry it out are under the Local Government Board, to offer something in the nature of a commission to look into these matters, so that we could have some Return made after the Recess. I trust I am not trespassing upon the time of the Committee by going into this matter; but my desire is that some practical result should come out of this discussion. We are approaching the Dissolution of Parliament. ["No, no!"] Well, we are approaching the Prorogation, at any rate. We are approaching both, I hope; but, at any rate, as we are approaching the Recess, a great deal might be done if the right hon. Gentleman would take this matter, and try to force the Local Government Inspectors to furnish him with Returns as to the working of the Act, and to show us practically where the fault lies. If he would do that at the commencement of next Session, we should be placed in a much better position to deal with the subject. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will grant us, at any rate, that consideration. If he will do so, he will be doing a work not merely of practical utility, but a work which I consider an absolute charity. We have heard from his own lips this evening that he agrees with hon. Members sitting on this side of the House; and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) has also given expression to the same strain of ideas; and when they both agree, and might be said to agree with hon. Members on this side of the House, I think we might, at any rate, ask them for this practical consideration of which I speak. I should like to get an answer from them upon this point before I draw the attention of the Chief Secretary to another matter, in which both the Local Government Board and the Secretary to the Treasury are interested.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot admit that the working of the Labourers' Act has been unsatisfactory. It cannot be considered unsatisfactory, seeing that the work has been overtaken by the Office in whose province it lies. If the hon. Member desires further information, and if he thinks that which has been given is not sufficient, I will endeavour to supplement it.

DR. TANNER: This afternoon I put a Question to the Chief Secretary with regard to the application of the Corporation of the City of Cork to borrow money for the erection of a Town Hall and offices. I understood I was putting it to the right person when I put it to the Chief Secretary. I was dealing with the action of the Local Government Board, who recommended the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury not to accede to this application on the part of the Corporation. I may as well remind the House of my Question. My Notice was—

> "To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if it is a fact that the Irish Local Government Board have recently recommended the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury not to permit the Corporation of the City of Cork to borrow money for the erection of a Town Hall and offices; whether it has been conclusively proved to the Board that such a hall and offices are necessary to the Corporation, and will ultimately prove a saving of expense; whether he is aware that the recommendation given by the Board that the Corporation should apply to Parliament for an extension of borrowing powers under the Cork Improvement Act will in its application entail not merely considerable expense, but, by delay incurred, possibly prevent the Corporation obtaining the desired premises; whether he will recommend the authorization of the proposed loan, as it is for a necessary public work, and one which will provide considerable employment for our artizans and labourers in this period of depression; and whether he can state on whose recommendation the decision of the Government was taken?"

Now, the City of Cork is a large city of over 80,000 inhabitants. It had, at one time, 100,000 inhabitants; but it has gone down 20,000. Well, Sir, that City is not provided with a Town Hall and Corporation offices, which, of course, are a desideratum; and the want of these necessary buildings puts the Corporation to a great deal of trouble and expense. They are obliged to carry on a portion of their business in a house in the South Mall, and another portion of their business, as well as the meetings of the Town Council, is carried on in the Grand Jury Room in the Cork Court House. Well, it is needless to say that where you have the work divided in this way, and where the offices of the Corporation are apart from the place where the discussion of City affairs goes on, you must be at a manifest disadvantage in the conduct of public business. Well, Sir, to refer to the past history of this subject, it was rather difficult for the Corporation to get hold of a suitable site for a Corporation Hall and offices. The Corporation, to my certain knowledge, have been trying for many years to get some place which would be suitable and available for this purpose, and also which would not be too expensive. They were anxious to get a site where they would not have to clear away existing buildings, as that would save them the expense of demolishing what stood on the ground before they could put up another structure. I recollect that at one time it was thought that a site on the South Mall could be got—a site which is occupied by large stores. I suppose the hon. Member for South Hunts (Mr. Smith-Barry) knows the site very well, as it is opposite—or nearly opposite—the County Club. Those buildings it would have been necessary to demolish in order that the Town Hall may be built upon the site; but it was found almost impossible to get hold of those stores, the firm in possession of them being anxious to keep it. A great many difficulties lay in the way of the Corporation, and accordingly from time to time this subject had to be deferred. Well, Sir, there is a building situate on the south bank of the River Lee, a building known as the Corn Market, and latterly the Corporation think they can acquire this. The Corn Market is carried on by a very antiquated Board, which consists of steady-going old Tories, and as usual they have got into trouble and are just as badly off as those unfortunate Boards of Guardians in the Western districts whose conduct has been condemned by the Chief Secretary. They have got into arrears and into terrible difficulties. They are prepared to part with the land in their hands. Originally, they wanted too much for it; but they are willing now to transfer a certain portion of the land to the Corporation at a reduced price, and the Corporation have nearly unanimously agreed to adopt the selection made by their officers of this site as a good one for the erection of a Town Hall and Corporation offices. Accordingly, I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that an opportunity has now arisen for obtaining a suitable site. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, in answer to my Question, says that the Cork Corporation have exhausted their borrowing powers; but at any rate now they have got a suitable site. I will deal with the site first, because at one time it was difficult to obtain, and now that difficulty has been removed. If they can get the money, the Corporation can now go on with the construction of a Town Hall, and on this point I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that when an opportunity occurs of getting a desirable site, it is always well to take the ball at the hop, and not to wait until by some means or other it falls and evades your grasp. Now as to the action of the Treasury. In the first place, in the year 1856 the Corporation obtained an Act, called the Cork Bridges and Water Works Act, which was to enable them to construct the present water works which are situated above the Wellington Bridge on the upper portion of the Lee. They are very excellent works, and a great deal of money was spent upon them. The Act was also to enable the Corporation to build two bridges, one known as St. Patrick's Bridge and the other known as the North Gate Bridge. Naturally enough, in connection with these large public works—namely, the building of two bridges over the widest branch of the River Lee, and the construction of these water works, there was more money spent than was allowed to be raised by the Act. The excess was actually £20,000. The Corporation finding that there was this excess over the amount they were allowed to raise did not like to go to the expense of getting a new Act for additional borrowing powers, but avoided that by borrowing money on the credit of a fund known as the Borough Fund, which consisted of property in land, tolls, and works. This fund was more in the nature of revenue, not being derivable from the rates, whereas the money which was borrowed for the construction of the water works was raised on the security of a mortgage on the water works and also on the water revenue—the income derived from the water supply which was furnished for manufacturing purposes. When they had got this money raised on the Borough Fund to meet the emergency arising in consequence of the excess in expenditure by £20,000, a Memorial was presented to the Treasury setting forth the entire facts, and after a certain amount of pressure had been brought to bear upon the Treasury—such pressure as I am endeavouring to bring to bear upon them at the present moment—they sanctioned a loan in or about the year 1861. Now, Sir, that was a case in which the Treasury might very properly have refused their sanction. Why? Because the Corporation having exceeded the amount they were entitled to raise by Act of Parliament, Her Majesty's Government, or rather the Lords of the Treasury, might very reasonably turn round, and say—"If you want this money, all you have got to do is to get an extension of the previous Act." Well, Sir, the Government behaved in a kinder way than that, and sanctioned this loan, as I have stated, in or about 1861. But then, in the year 1868, a new Act came into existence, an Act known as the Cork Improvement Act. This is rather complicated, but still I should like to put it before the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury as clearly as I can. There are really only two Acts, and the sanction of the Government for raising of this loan which I have just mentioned. In 1868 the Cork Improvement Act was obtained, and I will ask the hon. Gentleman's attention to these facts with regard to it. A clause was inserted for the purpose of making the water rate repay the £20,000, or, at any rate, the interest, and the instalments of the principal which had been up to that time paid out of the Borough Fund. The hon. Gentleman called my attention to that payment out of the Borough Fund. The Act also provided for future payments of interest and principal. Well, now, in this Act of 1868, it was enacted that a Town Hall was urgently required for the City of Cork, and the sole object of taking the power to increase the amount of money which that Act authorized the Cork Corporation to borrow on the credit of the Improvement Rate to the extent of £10,000 for the Town Hall and offices was because it would save the heavy cost of a mortgage deed. That I think explains itself. The only expense in raising money on the credit of the rate was about 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound; whereas, on the other hand, we know that raising money on a deed of mortgage amounts to hundreds of pounds. Accordingly, I must say I think hon. Members will agree with me that, in acting as the Cork Corporation did at that time, they acted very wisely, and trying to save the money of the unfortunate ratepayers at a season like this is a matter of manifest importance. Well, Sir, I would point out that these borrowing powers in no way prejudiced or affected the powers given to the Corporations by the Irish Municipal Act, 3 & 4 *Vict.* c. 108. The powers given to the Municipalities to borrow under that Act enabled the Corporation to borrow money for the purpose of erecting a Town Hall, and hence what the hon. Gentleman said to me to-day. He was manifestly labouring under an error, because there was £10,000 under this Cork Improvement Act allocated to the erection of a Town Hall, yet the Corporation were practically not bound, as the hon. Gentleman wished to imply by this Improvement Act, to erect a Town Hall. They might do that, Sir, under the Municipal Act to which I have alluded. Now, that borrowing power in no way prejudiced or affected the powers of the Corporation, and the Treasury seems to be legally wrong as well as wrong in the matter of common sense in their assumption that unless the Act of 1868 had been passed the Cork Corporation would have had no power to erect a Town Hall at all. All that the Act of 1868 said was that a Town Hall was desirable, and that it was one of the purposes for which another sum not exceeding £10,000 was to be raised on the credit of the Improvement Rate. Well, £10,000 is altogether insufficient for the purpose. In the first place, you have to purchase the site, and the hon. Gentleman surely must know that in a city like Cork, which is a large trading city, anything like a satisfactory site would cost a great deal of money. Then the erection of the building must necessarily cost a large sum, and the furnishing must also be very expensive. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury will be able to take all these matters into consideration, and he will know and will be generous enough to admit that £10,000 would be totally insufficient. Now, the Corporation raised all the money they could under the Improvement Act, and owing to the urgent necessity for and to the construction of very large drainage works, which were of the very utmost importance, owing to the opening of new streets and the clearing away of a certain number of slums—all very excellent works as the Committee will admit—the £10,000 has been spent. All the fever districts were cleared out by the judicious action of the Corporation of the City of Cork, and all the money which they had power to raise was spent in connection with this urgent municipal business. Well, having spent this money, and now having obtained a suitable site for a Town Hall and offices, they try to get sanction for an advance of money to enable them to carry out the work. They applied to the Lords of the Treasury. The Lords of the Treasury referred the matter to the Local Government Board for some unexplained reason, and the Local Government Board advised the Treasury not to advance the money. Well, I ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury who is responsible for the advice so given? Is it owing to any legal difficulties or deficiencies? I know, Sir, that in the City of Cork there is another body of gentlemen who want to try and force the Corporation to take over some premises they desire to part with. My hon. Friends have asked me not to go into that matter, and I will not go into it. I would a great deal sooner leave the matter, having made my statement as briefly as possible, to the tender mercies of the hon. Gentleman without doing so. I sincerely hope I shall receive a favourable answer from him. I must say this finally—that, at a period like the present, I conceive that all that is required is the sanction of the Treasury. Surely the City of Cork can give good security for the money they require; and at a time like the present it would be a great advantage to enable public works to be undertaken, because not only are these works necessary, but, if they are carried out, they will give a great deal of employment to the distressed population during the coming winter. I think the hon. Gentleman will not only be acting in a humane way, but acting in a way which I believe the whole population of the City of Cork will thank him for, if he gives favourable consideration to my proposal.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I am afraid I shall not be able to give what the hon. Member calls a satisfactory reply to his question, because I am afraid I cannot promise to reverse the decision already arrived at. The hon. Gentleman himself has pointed out to the Committee that in 1868 a Town Hall, which is now said to be so urgently required, was then also said to be urgently required. I have no doubt that it would be a great advantage to the city. I do not wish to offer any objection to the proposed scheme, and I do not wish to say anything to the detriment of Cork, and to suggest that the city is not of sufficient importance to warrant the construction of a Town Hall. I would point out, however, that no one is responsible for this refusal but the Treasury. The whole question is in a nutshell. The Corporation of Cork must borrow money under the sanction of Parliament. As I understand it, the Corporation of Cork obtained Parliamentary sanction to borrow to the extent of £62,000. I also understand that they have exercised that power to the extent of £61,500, and therefore there is no margin, so far as Parliamentary sanction to their borrowing power goes, for them to carry out the work they desire to undertake. Then, in addition to that, they have already borrowed money on the security of the Borough Fund. Well, I am informed that this fund, as it at present exists, is in this condition—that the expenditure slightly exceeds the income. Therefore, there is no security there which the Treasury could consent to lend money on. A simple solution of the difficulty would be this—the Corporation ought to come to Parliament and ask Parliament for increased borrowing powers. Having obtained those powers, they could exercise them. So far as I can see, there can be no doubt that Parliament, on a good case being made out, would give Cork power to exercise larger borrowing powers. I hope, therefore, that, so far as the refusal of the Treasury in this particular case is concerned, it will be clearly understood by the hon. Gentleman that there is no desire whatever to prevent the Corporation from borrowing money for the objects they have in view. The question is simply one of finance. We are bound to consider the question of the security of the money advanced. I think Cork would have no difficulty in borrowing if it had Parliamentary sanction; and I am one of those who strongly believe that it is desirable to impress every district in Ireland, as well as every hon. Member, with the great importance of exercising—shall I say local self-government?—and helping themselves as much as possible, rather than trusting to the Government to do these things for them.

DR. TANNER: Might I point out that if the Government had acted on the suggestion of their own Royal Commission, and if they had extended the municipal areas as recommended, there would then have been no extra rate. If a fault exists anywhere, therefore, it is on the part of the Government of the hon. Gentleman, because they have not acted on the suggestion of the Royal Commission. I regret that the hon. Gentleman does not see his way to reconsider his determination, and I am sorry that he has misled me alogether; because, as I said, it was in consequence of the action of the Local Government Board's representation that the Treasury refused the application. We know what the Local Government Board is in Ireland, and I trust that my hon. Friends will show their disapproval of the action of the Board by not allowing the Vote to be taken without a Division.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £23,751, to complete the sum for the Public Works Office, Ireland.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's County, Ossory): I desire, as briefly as possible, to draw attention to a matter which has excited a great deal of interest in the central districts of Ireland—namely, the drainage of the River Barrow. That subject has lately occupied the attention of a Royal Commission, and the recommendations of that Commission have been before the House.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not see in what way this is connected with the Vote for the Board of Works.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD: The Board of Works has entirely neglected its duty in this matter, and will not move in it, in spite of the urgent necessities of the case.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is no part of the duty of the Board of Public Works to take care of the River Barrow until the duty is imposed upon it by Parliament.

MR W. A. MACDONALD: Am I at liberty to speak on the question of £5,000, which was promised, but has not been given?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member would not be in Order in doing so on this Vote.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I wish to call the special attention of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) to Item 28, on page 6. It appears that the sum of £647,000 has been advanced in Ireland, of which I am glad to see that £605,000 has been returned, and it is the balance of about £41,000 which is outstanding that I wish to refer to. I want to impress on the Secretary to the Treasury that there has been a great deal of drought in Ireland, and I do not think the Treasury ought to press for the payment of this amount during the present year, at any rate, without some inquiry into the manner in which the money was raised, which has been paid back into the Treasury. I understand that the Treasury have been pressing for the repayment of the balance this year; and I think, under the circumstances in which the money was granted, that the Treasury should exercise some judgment in the matter, and ascertain by inquiry if the money was in every case advanced to the people of whom payment is now claimed. I believe that, owing to the pressure and hurry, one half of the money was not advanced to the particular individuals from whom payment is demanded, and there is, consequently, very great difficulty in collecting it. When the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) was Chancellor of the Exchequer I had a sort of promise that there should be an investigation of this subject, or, rather, that the subject should be considered. I thought at the time that the Local Government Board should examine into the circumstances; but I am of opinion now that the Treasury should do so. I propose that the outstanding amount should not be pressed for this year, on the ground that so large a proportion of the debt has been repaid, and that no money has been advanced this year for seed purposes. I think the hon. Gentleman will find that the hurry and pressure I have referred to was purely owing to the *laches* of the Government in sending out a wrong Circular, which, notwithstanding my representations, they refused to withdraw and substitute for it another. On the grounds stated, I think there is a strong case and reason why the balance should be remitted. The hon. Gentleman will see that the whole amount outstanding is only 6 per cent of the total amount advanced, and I think he might look into the matter, and see how much it is possible to recover, and how much could not possibly be got in. Then, with regard to Galway Harbour, which is now in the hands of the Board of Public Works. In this case, a large sum of money was advanced and the harbour authorities got into great trouble with the Treasury, with the result that the Board of Public Works have now taken possession of the work and are the authorities at the harbour. They have cleaned out the passage to the old dock; but the drift has blocked up the passage to the new dock. What I want to impress upon the Treasury is that they are losing money under the present system, because ships will not go into the new dock.

The CHAIRMAN: The question raised by the hon. and gallant Gentleman would be appropriate to the Vote for Public Works Loans in Class I.

Colonel NOLAN: I am not asking for any improvement in the harbour, Mr. Courtney. The Board of Public Works having taken over the harbour, I am only asking that it should be kept in repair.

The CHAIRMAN: That is work which does not come under this Vote.

Colonel NOLAN: I shall be satisfied with the observations I have made, and I hope that, the Secretary to the Treasury's attention having been called to the subject, he will see that the ships are allowed to go into the new dock. I hope I shall not be out of Order in drawing attention to the way in which the accounts are made up with regard to fishery piers and harbours. I want the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury to get the Board of Public Works to publish an abstract of the actual money spent on these works, and how much has now been spent on contracts. My point is, that if these accounts were published, it would be shown that there is a large balance of, say, £20,000, which might be devoted to building and other purposes.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I wish to call the attention of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) to one or two points in connection with the Board of Public Works, and to the way in which the Inspectors do their duty. A great many piers and harbours on the South Coast are, in the first place, erected at a considerable expense; a portion of the money is furnished by the Treasury, and a portion levied on the local rates; but, unfortunately, owing to the deficiency of inspection, and in many cases owing to the deficiency of engineering, which I believe may be referred to on this Vote, the work is not satisfactorily done. I wish to refer to some circumstances in connection with the new piers which have just been finished.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will not be in Order in doing that on this Vote.

Dr. TANNER: Then, I should like to refer to the subject of ancient monuments. Our country is one with a great and glorious history; its monuments ought to have that consideration which they would certainly receive from Irishmen if they were consulted about them. But their restoration and preservation are in the hands of a Department, at the head of which there is a Scotchman, and not an Irishman; and they do not, therefore, receive the consideration which they merit. In February last I happened to be in the county of Galway; I visited the town called Clonmacnoise, or "the Home of the Kings," where there are two relics of the past—one the Abbey, and the other an old castle—which are well worthy of preservation, and demand that cognizance should be taken of them by the Inspector of Ancient Monuments. These relics are falling into a bad state of disrepair, and I hope the hon. Gentleman will call the attention of the Inspector to them, in order that he may visit the place, and see that proper steps are taken for their preservation. Then there is the Round Tower of Cloyne, which belongs to a class of antiquities that receive the greatest consideration at the hands of foreigners, although not so much at the hands of Englishmen. With regard to this tower, if it is to be repaired, I make the suggestion that it should not be treated in the same way as the Round Tower of Kildare, which has been restored with battlements, which is absurd, and out of all character with these constructions, which were cone-shaped. The architect who had this matter in hand, and received a large sum of money for what he did, has made a great mull of the restoration, and I urge that these monuments should not be treated in the barbaric manner in which this gentleman has treated the Round Tower at Kildare.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): If the hon. Member will look at the records of public works in Ireland, he will see that they have received a good deal of attention during last year, and I believe he will admit that, on the whole, the work has been done in a very intelligent manner; indeed, the Treasury have felt that, so far from falling short of their duties, the authorities have rather exceeded them in this matter. With regard to what has fallen from the hon. and gallant Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan), I wish to say at once that there is no desire to press unduly for the arrears outstanding for seed. It is true that some of the amounts are small; but I dare say the hon. and gallant Gentleman is perfectly well aware that in some districts the amount outstanding is much in excess of what it is in others. [Colonel NOLAN: They are richer.] That is true; but in some districts although the persons who actually received the loans have paid the money back to the Guardians, who have not paid it over to the Treasury. I am quite sure the hon. and gallant Gentleman sees the distinction. [Colonel NOLAN: Hear, hear!] With that reservation, then, I am glad to say that I am entirely in accord with him in thinking that every consideration ought to be shown. I am afraid that I should not be in Order in replying in detail to the hon. and gallant Gentleman's remarks on the subject of Galway Harbour and Dock, but I may venture to say that the question raised by him shall be taken into consideration, with regard to the contracts; although it is true that, as compared with the total amount of the contracts, there appears to be a surplus, the hon. and gallant Gentleman will know that Estimates are sometimes exceeded. I will, however, make a note of the subject referred to, which is very worthy of consideration.

COLONEL NOLAN: I quite agree that the Guardians who have received the money for the seed loans ought to pay it over to the Treasury; but there is a very small margin, perhaps not more than £7,000, with respect to which it is very difficult to ascertain who got the money, in consequence, as I have said, of the wrong Circular having been issued by the Government, and I think this amount might be wiped out.

MR. JACKSON was understood to signify assent.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) I wish to say that Irish Members generally regard with the greatest satisfaction, and I, for my part, acknowledge the spirit in which the work with regard to ancient monuments has been carried on, and I trust the Treasury will act liberally in the matter.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): While agreeing with what has fallen from the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy), I wish to point out that we object to the insufficiency of the work done, and to the amount of remuneration to the officers, which is not sufficient to stimulate perseverance in the work. This is a question I take some personal interest in. The attempt at restoration has in some cases been a failure, while in other cases it has been comparatively successful. I think fair praise is to be given to the efforts made, and I only complain that greater efforts have not been made, and a more liberal expenditure incurred for the purpose of preserving these ruins. Now, I want to call the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury to one or two matters which crop up on this Vote. The point I wish particularly to refer to has reference to the reclamation of the Clare slob lands. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jackson) is aware, as previous Secretaries to the Treasury are aware, to their cost, that for some time past a considerable expenditure has been incurred in connection with these lands. I do not know the exact amount which has been expended upon these works in the past, but an additional sum of something like £5,000 is required this year for the purposes of this reclamation. A singular thing is that, when these works have reached a certain point of completeness, a storm invariably arises and blows them down again. It is something like the attempts of Foreign Nations to invade England. Every time the enemy's ships have got near to the shores a storm has arisen and destroyed them. Now, I want to know whether this storm is to be annual, and whether the expenditure is to go on for ever? If we are to have many more of these annual grants, the result will be that the Treasury will expend something like £200,000 upon something like £10,000 worth of property. That would be an extremely bad bargain, and it would be very much better to let these works go by the board than to spend this sum of money upon them annually. I believe that if these works had been properly looked after—if the Irish Board of Works were a competent body, instead of meriting the distinction of being the most incompetent public body in the whole world, infinitely the worst body in Ireland, and, therefore, the worst body—if the reclamation of the Clare Slob Lands had been properly attended to they would now have been works of some value. I believe that if they had been reclaimed before the great depression of land in Ireland they would very nearly have recompensed the original outlay. The original design was a swindle undertaken by an English adventurer who imposed on the late Mr. W. E. Forster to such an extent that the right hon. Gentleman induced the Treasury in 1880 to make certain grants of lands towards this reclamation. The Treasury having been induced to make a grant of something like £48,000, I presume they feel they are obliged to proceed with the works. Fully £70,000 has been advanced by the Treasury, and still we are no nearer the completion of the works. It is a public scandal that this money should be thrown away—thrown as it were into the sea, or into the River Shannon. We have no guarantee whatever that these works when completed will do more than to, a very small extent, recoup the Treasury. This Vote comes on every year, and every year the Board of Trade have the same weary tale to tell. It is time the Secretary to the Treasury took some strenuous action with regard to the completion of these works. Within the past 12 months £5,000 has been spent upon what appears to be absolutely useless work, and unless we have some definite assurance that this expenditure will not be continued any longer; but that the works will be brought to a completion, and something done to recoup the taxpayers for the amount expended upon the works, I shall certainly consider it my duty to divide against the Vote for Public Works.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I should like some information from the Treasury with regard to loans made in respect of the construction of certain railways in Ireland. There is a railway in course of construction through the part of the County of Cavan which I represent, and I want to know to what extent the Treasury have made advances, if any, in respect of this line. Then there is the Cork and Coachford Line, upon which some information is very necessary. I desire to view this matter from an impartial point of view, and now that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) is in his place, let me appeal to him to put some restraint upon the system of lending money in Ireland upon bad security. Some of my hon. Friends think it is a very grand thing to borrow money from the British Exchequer; but they seem to forget that we are a partner in the Exchequer or firm. Only the other day I was impressing upon my hon. Friends the absurdity of encouraging the squandering of public money in Ireland. They said—"Oh! it's all right; the money will be supplied by the English Exchequer, and we shall never be expected to pay." Now, I should like to offer one argument in opposition to the view taken up by my hon. Friends, and it is that if we ever get Home Rule these charges will probably be handed over to us as good assets, and the losses may possibly come out of the ratepayers. I therefore think it is a very short-sighted policy to encourage the outlay of public money that is not going to be reproductive. It is all very good to spend money, if it is to be reproductive; but I do seriously object to a system of expending money which is not going to pay a reasonable amount of interest. Now, some of my constituents have recently held a meeting at which they criticized this new railway—the Cavan, Leitrim, and Roscommon Railway it is to be called. They criticized adversely the way in which the work has been done. One of the statements made at the meeting was that the

County Cavan ratepayers would have to pay 15 or 16 pence in the pound to make up the guarantee, and it was maintained that the loss to the ratepayers would actually be 3*s.* in the pound, which would amount to 15 per cent upon the rentals of the properties. This is by no means a political question. The chairman of the meeting was a Conservative landowner, one of the other speakers was a Conservative land agent; another was a Catholic magistrate who lives in the neighbourhood, and whom I know very well, and there were present Nationalists as well as staunch Conservatives. I should like to know, too, what has been done in the case of the Schull and Skibbereen Line, which appears to be a complete failure?

COLONEL NOLAN: I quite agree that the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) is justified in calling attention to the schemes in which his constituents are interested, though it must be remembered there are other Members for Cavan and Roscommon and Leitrim, besides the hon. Member. It may be the fact that it is injudicious to construct this Cavan Railway, and that the hon. Gentleman is justified in objecting to the expenditure of public money upon it. It is only when my hon. Friend gets more enterprising and goes into other parts of the country, and he falls into mistakes. Now, in Galway the people are very anxious for tramways and railways, and all the regulations passed have been in favour of the schemes. The rate of interest at which the Treasury have lent money has been reduced from 5 per cent to 4 per cent; 5 per cent was admitted to be too high a rate of interest; indeed, the Government have actually made money by the advances towards Irish railways. Whatever may be the case in Cavan, I know cases of small railways in which the Government have been paid most regularly. The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) must recollect that if he makes a good railway he develops a whole district. The Treasury are quite right in getting in the money. I admit that in the present year the repayment has not been so large as usual; but that is owing to the present unfortunate circumstances of Ireland. The question of railway communication is really one for the Government of the country. In small countries, the State make the railways at their own expense. Such a system is not suitable to England; but I believe it is suitable, to a certain extent, to Ireland. I must say that in the case of most of the tramways the Secretary to the Treasury now gets ample security. He gets the security of the rates of the whole land in the district, and there is a good collector in the shape of the Grand Jury. My hon. Friend is prejudiced against all railways which do not pay good dividends. I will not go as far as that, because I think it is very often to the interest of the State to advance money at a very low rate of interest. Of course, whatever interest is charged ought to be paid, and I maintain that up to the present the Treasury have made money on what they have advanced upon Irish railways.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I entirely support the views of my hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar). I maintain that if we are going to take over Ireland, we must take it over as a going concern. That being so, we ought, at the present time, to be extremely suspicious of the vultures who come over from the City of London, and try to suck our blood. I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman in regard to the tramways. What are the facts respecting the Schull and Skibbereen Line? I do not know whether it is true; but I am told that £60,000 has been spent upon the line, but that £50,000 could not be got for it. Take the case of the Waterford Railway. When I first went to the country 15 or 16 years ago the rate was 8*d.* in the pound for the half year. Now it is 2*s.* 6*d.*, because the people have to pay for this miserable railway. No works ought to be made that are not going to pay. Why should people be saddled with works which will be unremunerative? It is all very well for contractors to say that this is a very good thing, but it is not the interest of contractors which have to be consulted, but the interests of the people of Ireland. I advise the Treasury to beware of the railway contractors and persons in the City of London who only want to milk the Irish. Personally, I look with considerable suspicion upon Gentlemen who come over to Ireland with benevolent paunches to try and show their benevolence to the Irish people.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): I have received strong representations from my constituents respecting the Cavan, Leitrim, and Roscommon Railway. They are extremely anxious that the Board of Trade should not pass the line without the most careful inquiry. They believe that the line might possibly be useful, if it was properly constructed; but that as it is now being made it will be a burden to the ratepayers.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I quite agree with the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) as to the undesirability of the Treasury lending money for the construction of railways or tramways, unless there is a good prospect of the lines being successful. There cannot be a doubt that the Schull and Skibbereen Line is a standing disgrace to some Department or other. As far as my knowledge goes, it is a standing disgrace to the Board of Works in Ireland. They sent down an Inspector and the railway was passed, although it was quite unfit for a permanent way for any engine to travel on. An engine was sent over the line and it got stuck, and now the whole thing is an unworkable concern. It is a matter of grave reproach to a great Public Department that a short railway of this kind could not be properly looked after, especially after all the attention which was directed to it by the Members of the district and various other Irish Members. This is a matter we shall have to watch very closely indeed. Before the matter proceeds any further, we shall have to receive an assurance from the Secretary to the Treasury that they will hold the contractors so tight that they cannot receive any further money until the line is properly constructed, and until locomotives can travel safely upon it. With regard to the Cork and Coachford Tramway, I must take a different view to my hon. Friend (Mr. Biggar). The hon. Members for Cork, including myself, who have an intimate acquaintance with the locality through which this line passes, are of opinion that, with ordinary management, the line can be made to pay its way. If that had not been our opinion, we should have been slow to have voted for the construction of the railway, which we did in the early part of last year. I cordially agree with my hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) as to the general principles upon which these light railways should be constructed. That is, that money should not be advanced unless there is a reasonable prospect of the lines paying expenses. I understand my hon. Friend's objection to tramway and light railway schemes is, that it is inequitable and unfair in the event of failure to saddle the occupiers of land or other rateable property with the entire amount. He thinks that if there is a loss, it should be borne in equal proportions by the owners as well as the occupiers; and that such being the case, there is great responsibility on Irish Members who sanction, or in any way aid and permit, the construction of these lines. I should like the Committee, and other persons who are not present, to thoroughly understand that we should have been very slow to have had any hand in the construction of the Cork and Coachford Line, if we had not been strongly of opinion, as business men, that with proper management the line would pay, and be a great factor in the development of the districts through which it passes.

MR. BIGGAR: Of course, it is not a pleasant thing to refer to a particular tramway system; but I may remark that the farming classes of Ireland, as a body, are very large lenders to Irish banks, and that if these railway schemes were fair and reasonable schemes, the local people have plenty of funds to invest in them.

COLONEL NOLAN: No, they have not.

MR. BIGGAR: It is a notorious fact that they have. Why, only recently there were two illustrations of this in the cases of Guinness's Brewery and *The Freeman's Journal;* the people rushed to invest their money, simply because they were convinced they were paying concerns. In the case of these railways, however, the Treasury lends money, and then it has to be dragged out of the unfortunate ratepayers, many of whom are on the verge of pauperism and can ill afford the money. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) knows better than I do the amount of money lent on schemes of different sorts in Ireland, upon similar representations to those made in the case of the reclamation of the Clare Slob Lands and the Schull and Skibbereen Lines. I sincerely hope that money will not be advanced by the Treasury upon these useless undertakings. Certainly I, personally, would never think of investing a shilling of my own money in a single one of them. Many of the railway schemes which have been promoted in Ireland during the last 20 or 30 years have ruined the promoters, and have proved a serious burden upon the unfortunate ratepayers. Indeed, the only people who have derived any benefit from them at all have been the contractors.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): Speaking personally, and on behalf of the Government, I may say we are extremely obliged to hon. Members who have spoken so strongly, and, I believe, so wisely, with regard to the advances of public money which are made from time to time. Now, Sir, before answering the question put to me with regard to those railways, I should like to answer the hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenny). I will admit at once that there is no case which has ever come before me since I have been at the Treasury which has more exercised me than the condition of the expenditure on the reclamation of the Clare Slob Lands. So far as I understand the matter—I do not wish to speak in too strong terms about them, but I certainly feel very strongly on the subject—the original estimates must have been based upon calculations which were entirely erroneous, or there must have been extremely bad management in the expenditure mentioned. We are landed in this position—that there has been a very large sum of money expended on this reclamation, and I dare say it may be that advances have been obtained in recent years on the understanding, or on the representation, that if a certain sum of money were advanced it would complete the whole scheme. But we were in this position, we had to face this difficulty—that a large sum of money had to be expended, and we were assured that a certain sum would complete the expenditure; and unless it is completed it is hopeless to expect that any return will ever be made for the amount expended. I do not feel in a position to defend the course which has been taken with regard to the enormous expenditure which has been made, and the extremely unsatisfactory result which has been obtained. I will join hon. Gentlemen in saying that I think the circumstances connected with the reclamation, in this particular instance, are such as do not reflect credit on those who have had to do with the matter. The works which have been effected so far are extremely valuable; and it is not at all unlikely that we may get back a portion of the money which has been spent.

MR. T. M. HEALY: You will never get a sixpence of it.

MR. JACKSON: We may get a portion of the money back. The hon. Gentleman the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar) has given voice to what I may call an extremely sound sentiment. He is extremely sound upon this question of light railways in Ireland; but I am sure he will agree that I am only bound to advocate proceedings for which I am actually responsible, and that, therefore, with regard to the schemes which he has mentioned I am not to be blamed. With regard to these schemes, I confess I heard, with some surprise, and a great deal of pleasure, from the hon. Member, who knows Ireland so well, that, in his judgment, whenever it is necessary to make a railway of this kind in Ireland the local farmers are able to lend all the money required for the construction of the line. I am glad to hear that the local farmers are sufficiently well off to be able to do this—it is extremely satisfactory.

COLONEL NOLAN: We do not agree with him in that.

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Gentleman has spoken about the Leitrim, Roscommon, and Cavan Railway. Since I have been at the Treasury there has been no advance made to that railway, and I do not think it likely that there will be any. My efforts have been directed to endeavouring, if possible, to obtain some arrangement by which a very considerable advance—I think, £100,000—would have been made by the Government, under which we should, if not immediately, at any rate, at some not very distant date, have obtained some interest on the outlay made, bearing in mind that the Government hold, upon this line, the first mortgage—that is to say, the first claim upon the whole property. I believe the hon. Member knows that the amount considered necessary for this railway is about £250,000. The line is being worked, and the returns show a very slight improvement in the receipts. I am not able to say what is the condition of the rolling stock or the condition of the permanent way; but I can quite understand that, under the present circumstances, every economy that can be practised is practised. I am able to say, with regard to the Ballymoney and Ballycastle Railway, that no advance has been made by the Treasury.

Mr. BIGGAR: Has the interest been paid upon what has been lent?

Mr. JACKSON: We have been receiving some interest; but this railway has been rather in difficulties. I do not know that I am not justified in saying to the Committee that the rolling stock, which certainly ought to have been included in the original contract, and ought to have been covered by the original advances, apparently was bought from some individual or from some company who retain a charge upon it, and the position is that unless the owners obtain payment for their rolling stock, they are in a position, being the owners of it, to remove it from the line. Therefore it is a question of making the best of a bad bargain. But I am able to say to the Committee that arrangements are in progress by which I hope to bring affairs into a satisfactory condition, and that I have reason to believe, from the figures I have seen in the traffic returns, that the state of things is much more promising for the future. In fact, what I am informed leads me to believe that we shall get back our money with interest in the course of time. With regard to the Cork and Coachford Line, I must plead guilty to some responsibility. It appeared to me to be an instance in which a good case had been made out for some help, and a case in which unless that help were forthcoming the large expenditure which had already taken place on the railway would be more or less sacrificed. The district would have been saddled with a great responsibility. It must be borne in mind that in this particular case—and this is rather a curious instance of the way in which business is managed in certain districts in Ireland—that whether the railway continued to run or not, the locality would have been liable for payment of interest on the guarantee shares. The Government interest was only from a general point of view, and from a desire to promote the interests of the country. We have undertaken to find £20,000 for the completion of the line, and we have endeavoured to attach to it such conditions as will secure that the money shall not be thrown away. The Committee must bear in mind that there has been already expended upon the line more than £40,000, and that to the advance which has been proposed, an additional £10,000 will be advanced for the completion of the line to Blarney. The additional £10,000 will only be advanced on the completion of the line to Coachford—the completion of the whole undertaking including the rolling stock—and the line being certified to be in working order. We have taken such precautions as we can to secure that this shall be found to be one of the light railways in Ireland of service to the district through which it runs. It will be found, I hope, ultimately not to be a charge either on the district or on the Treasury. Now, with regard to the Schull and Skibbereen Line, I have no personal responsibility for that, and the statement made by the hon. Gentleman with regard to inspection, I believe to be quite correct. What I would point out is, that it appears to be a fatal blot about all these concerns, that the baroney which, in the first instance, is responsible for giving encouragement to the scheme, and sanctioning the scheme, and guaranteeing the interest on the amount advanced, seems to take so little interest in the carrying out of the works.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: It is the Grand Jury.

Mr. JACKSON: I do not care who it is; but I say it is their bounden duty, if they sanction these lines, to pay some attention to their future progress, and to endeavour to ensure that the work is carried on according to contract.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: They are your own Party.

Mr. JACKSON: I am not seeking to make the matter a Party question at all; but I am endeavouring to treat it in a business-like manner. What I say is that everybody who is responsible for sanctioning a line in a district is bound to see that the work is done.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Why did the Government Inspector pass the line in an improper state?

Mr. JACKSON: So far as I have been able to gather, the deficiency has rather been that the engines employed upon the line were too light for the traffic—too light for the traffic, considering the gradients they had to overcome. It has been rather a question of that kind than a question of the construction of the line.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Did not the Inspector examine the engines?

MR. JACKSON: Certainly not. The Inspector of the Board of Trade has nothing to do with the rolling stock. All he has to do is to certify as to the permanent way, and the safety of the line. I think I have noticed most of the questions which have been raised. All I can say, in conclusion, is this—that I am exceedingly grateful to hon. Members for the support which their speeches and the action they have taken to-night will give me in my endeavours to resist the very numerous applications which I receive from speculative contractors. I should like to put it in this way—that I hope the action taken to-night will be looked upon as an indication that no encouragement will be given to fresh undertakings of this nature by hon. Members opposite, or by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. M. J. KENNY: There is one defect in the Tramways Act which may, to some extent, account for the blot the hon. Gentleman has referred to. Under the Tramways Act there appears to be no power given to the County Inspector or Surveyor to inspect the lines of railway. I contend that the County Surveyor should always have power to go and inspect works in course of progress. If that were the case, I believe that a great many evils which now occur would be obviated. It is no use appointing Local Authorities to look after the lines, because they may know nothing about surveying—it is no use doing this, and leaving those persons in the country who know something about the matter no voice in the question. I think if that defect in the Tramways Act had been remedied when the Act was passed, a good many of the mistakes which have occurred would have been avoided. But I am principally concerned in the observations of the hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar), and the reply that they have elicited from the Secretary to the Treasury. My hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan enunciated certain principles with which I agree, and certain principles with which I utterly disagree. I believe that the Tramways Act has been in a good many instances extremely beneficial, and that there have been certain cases where encouragement has been given to undertakings which are certain to repay any sum of money advanced upon them. I would point to the railway in which a Member for one of the Divisions of Dublin is interested —I refer to the Ennis and West Clare Line. Had no encouragement been given by the Government to that line it would probably never have been constructed; but now that it is made I look upon it as absolutely sure to pay its way, and more than pay its way. That is an instance which distinctly disproves the general principle laid down by the hon. Member for West Cavan. What I join with him in objecting to is the advance of money on insufficient security for projects which show no reasonable sign of giving any return. I believe that the *onus probandi* should be thrown on the promoters of those schemes, and that they should be proved to be sound before the Government advances one halfpenny towards carrying them out. I think that the Treasury should only advance money on schemes of this kind on security that can be considered ample. I have seen a tabulated statement by the Board of Public Works as to the security afforded by the baronies and counties for public works. There are some cases in which the security given is totally insufficient, and, of course, there are other cases in which it has been ample. It is only in these cases, I think, that advances should be made by the Treasury. My hon. Friend spoke of the farmers in the localities and other persons being capable, or, rather, being in a position to invest money in undertakings of this kind. He said that if undertakings of this kind were of a healthy description, these persons would readily invest their money in them. I do not for a moment agree in any statement to the effect that any appreciable number of the Irish farmers have a single halfpenny to invest, so far as lending money to the banks is concerned. They do not lend money to the banks; on the contrary, as a general rule, the banks have to lend money to them. If you were to calculate the difference between the amount of the advances payable by the banks to the farmers and the amount payable by the farmers to the banks, you would find that in the case of every £100 the farmers would have to be debited to the extent of £99. If my hon. Friend will look at the lists of the shareholders in Guinness's Brewery and *The Freeman's Journal* concerns, he will find the names scarcely include a single farmer. That is about the best test you can possibly apply to a question of this kind. But I quite agree that unless the promoters of a railway can satisfy the Treasury that there is an absolute certainty that their undertakings will pay working expenses, and will not be a burden on the Consolidated Fund or the baronies, the Treasury should not advance them a single halfpenny. With regard to the Clare Slob Lands, the money advanced on this reclamation has been looked upon by successive Secretaries to the Treasury as a concession from England to Ireland. I believe the works were originally undertaken not so much on the pretence of the reclamation of land, as that of the reclamation of the natives. A gentleman of lively imagination and great ingenuity came up to Dublin Castle, met the late Mr. W. E. Forster, and made a dramatic speech to him, in which he explained that if the money of the State were expended on the reclamation of these lands that concurrently with that reclamation would proceed the reclamation of the people from the state of savagery in which they then existed. I believe such a speech as that was made, and made in the presence of Mr. Forster, and I believe that Mr. Forster's philanthropic mind and heart were touched, and that he immediately used his influence with the Treasury to get this money advanced. Mr. Forster's philanthropy prevailed. It was on the representation of this Gentleman who went over to Dublin Castle, and succeeded in getting money advanced on these false pretences, that the Treasury were induced to enter on a bargain which will finally land them in the loss of something like £100,000. I will tell the hon. Gentleman this—that my honest belief is that this land can never be reclaimed, as it is considerably under the level of the Shannon, or, rather, under the level of the Fergus. This land is an extremely broad place where the Fergus branches out into the Shannon. You may almost call it the sea, and the tide there has so much force that the waves are almost as powerful as in the Atlantic Ocean itself. Even if you had the sea-wall completed to-morrow, a storm might come like that of December last, which will never be forgotten by the people in the locality, and would break down the result of all your labour. The work is a bad job, and the Government will never be able to make anything out of it. The whole wall will have to come down with a run. If I were the Secretary to the Treasury, I would never spend another halfpenny upon what appears to me to be an altogether impossible and useless work.

Mr. MURPHY (Dublin, St. Patrick's): In the discussion concerning the railways and tramways promoted in Ireland under the Act of 1883, there seems to have been some little confusion in the minds of hon. Gentlemen. I think they have been confounding the question as to whether these undertakings should be completed or not by local expenditure with the question whether the Treasury should have lent money on them or not. It must be remembered that the Treasury can never lose a single shilling of the advance it has made, because it has the security of the rates of large districts for the repayment of the capital and interest. The responsibility with regard to the Schull and Skibbereen Tramway ought not to be thrown upon the Board of Works, the Treasury, or other high public authority. The contractors were local people, and it is to their neglect of looking after the line that probably the whole failure is due. The local people had the employing of the contractors, and it was for them to see that the work was done properly. I have no hesitation in saying that the whole responsibility lies at the door of the local people. There have only been some half-dozen projects under the Act, and some of these will be useful, whilst some will not be useful; but with regard to the general question touched upon by the hon. Member for West Cavan as to the desirability of these undertakings, I would point out that for 20 years back, with the exception of a very few short lines of railway, there has not been a single line made without local support—I mean without local guarantee. Now, out of the many lines for which guarantees have been given from time to time, there have been two or three which have not turned out as it was anticipated they would, partly owing to the mismanagement of the promoters and the people who had charge of them, and partly owing to the fact that the schemes ought never to have been undertaken. It must be borne in mind, however, that in addition to the facilities for travelling which have been given by all those lines, the condition of the districts through which they run has been greatly improved. The price of butter and cattle and agricultural produce generally has improved, and other advantages have accrued to the locality. As I have said, some six or seven lines have been laid down under the Tramways Act; and it may be satisfactory to the hon. Member to know that of the English promoters who went over to Ireland in order to promote these undertakings, not a single one was successful in getting charge of a line. The Irish people have carried out the work themselves. I think that if the Treasury could see their way to giving assistance of one kind or another to the exceptional case of the Schull and Skibbereen Tramway, they would remove the only great scandal of this kind which is ever likely to occur in connection with these schemes in Ireland. I should like to hear from the hon. Gentleman whether the Treasury can see their way to do something. The liability under the Act, so far as the localities are concerned, is very great. They are not only obliged to pay interest on the money invested, but they are also obliged to raise more money in order to complete the tramways, to keep them in order, and, if necessary, to work them.

Mr. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.): In connection with this tramway, Sir, I think the hon. Gentleman had not the means of ascertaining the facts in the same way as the Poor Law Guardians of the district or the principal ratepayers. Mr. Justice O'Brien, at the recent Assizes held in Cork, said that it was by the default of an officer of the Board of Trade that the line was now in the hopeless condition in which it is. A gentleman was sent down by the Board of Trade, and passed that line; yet seven months after he had done so it was practically useless for all purposes connected with traffic in the district; and it is very strange, Mr. Courtney, that such a thing should have been allowed. I will not dwell upon it at any length; in fact, I suppose I would not be in Order in discussing the action of the Board of Trade in this matter; but I feel bound to point out that the very gentleman who passed the line was himself sent down to investigate into the causes of its collapse. That, I think, is most strange. According to his Report, which I have here, the locomotive in use was not a proper one; the banks had fallen in, the gradients were too steep, and the curves were too sharp; and if he were able to find all these faults with it now, surely he ought to have seen them when he passed the line on his first inspection. But, however that may be, it is altogether a most lamentable occurrence. I can call it nothing else; and I would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whom I see in his place, if he will take into consideration the condition of the ratepayers, who are a very poor class in that locality, and if he will come to their aid by giving them some grant out of the £50,000 which he proposes to set apart for the relief of Ireland?

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is not in Order in discussing that grant.

Mr. GILHOOLY: May I ask a question, at all events? Two of the baronies have guaranteed a sum of £57,000 for this tramway. I will ask is it not fair that the Government, by the default of whose officers this calamity has been brought about, should come to the assistance of the ratepayers, and relieve them of some of the unjust burdens which will be thereby cast upon them?

Mr. BIGGAR: Before this branch of the subject is dropped I wish to say one or two words. I wish, first, to apologize to the Committee for speaking so often; but I am exceedingly anxious that this matter should be fully investigated. I need not say that in the remarks which I have made I spoke without reference to politics. Some of my hon. Friends have complained of what I said in regard to the farmers of Ireland having sufficient money to carry out any reasonable scheme. Well, I repeat that the farmers are able to make investments, and that there is in the Irish banks a large amount of deposits.

I happen to know that a substantial number of farmers have money to lend. Of course, there are others who are very needy. I did not intend to generalize, and to infer that every farmer was well off. But I just now asked a question about the Ballymony and Ballycastle Railway; and I should like for a moment to be allowed to refer to another railway which has been in existence a good many years—at any rate, 10 years to my knowledge—and which runs through some of the Northern counties. I refer to the Northern Counties Railway. Now, I believe that is not able to pay the interest on the money borrowed from the Government, and I wish to ask how are the railways which are made for and through poor districts where the traffic is exceedingly small to be expected to pay the interest on money borrowed for their construction? I really do not see any possibility of Ireland being able to pay for any new railway, and I therefore do protest against loans being granted for the making of any fresh lines. In the case of the Cavan, Leitrim, and Roscommon Railway, a few thousand pounds were first asked for, and having been obtained and spent, then the promoters came to us and said—"Unless you give us more money we shall not be able to finish the lines, and then you will lose all the money you have already invested." The same course was pursued in regard to the Slob Line in County Clare. A commencement was made by the Government on a comparatively small sum, and as soon as the cash had been exhausted, then they came to us for more money, and threatened that if we did not give it, what we had invested would be all lost. Now, I think that this is very wrong, and I wish to enter my protest against such a course of action, because the result is that money is obtained by one means or the other, and a great deal more is spent than was ever contemplated. A reference has been made to the line which is to have a branch to Blarney. I believe this is nearly finished; and it has been suggested, in regard to the application for another £10,000, that it would have been better to sink what has already been invested in the line, and not to spend any more money upon it. The fact is, the line will run through a village in which there are very few inhabitants, and very few houses. I am not speaking from my own personal knowledge; I have never been to the place; but I am told there are not more than 50 houses; that neither fair nor market is held in the village; and that it is perfectly absurd to talk about making a railway there. I advise that this line should be made a suburban tramway, and I think that probably then it might pay.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I will not enter at any great length into these matters, as I should have done had I risen earlier; but I would like to say a few words in reference to what has fallen from the lips of the hon. Member for West Cavan. But before I do so I should like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury a question. Our anxiety, I may say, is to keep communication by means of railways to the sea-coast; and we believe that there are many small towns which, if they could be brought into connection with the sea-coast, would afford great encouragement to the work of developing the fishing industries. Then with regard to the money provided for these undertakings. It is said that the money is got in England. But what is the cause of the money being got there? It is that the Parliamentary agents are in England; that the railway engineers live in London; and that the lawyers in London have the first grab at what is to be obtained from it. Therefore, it is not a matter of surprise that the money that is necessary to be advanced is also found in London. We do not find fault with Englishmen for investing their money in this case; we only wish they could continue to do so. And with regard to these tramways, I have no fear that if they were properly managed, if there were proper local management, they would show much better results. Let it be remembered that the Grand Jury of a county is called upon to pass these undertakings, and that in that Grand Jury there are not only the representatives of the baronies who will have to contribute to the cost, but there are representatives of other baronies who have no interest whatever in the matter. The Grand Jury do not have to pay anything. The majority of the Grand Jury have no earthly interest in the matter; practically they are non-cesspayers, not that there is anything in that that I wish to complain of very strongly; but

I do wish to direct the attention of the Secretary to the Treasury, and to get an answer—I hope a favourable one—with regard to the loans that are advanced to tenants by the Board of Works. In this matter this anomaly has often happened in Ireland, and I ventured to draw the attention of the Government to it some time ago by a Question; but latterly the putting of Questions has been so futile that I gave up the practice altogether. There is a class of tenants in Ireland who have not come under the recent Land Act of 1881. They practically ought to be under it, but technically they are not. These tenants are those on the estates of minors, or estates in trust for minors, administered by Masters in Chancery; and I believe this matter also affects the estates of persons in lunacy, and therefore the unfortunate tenants, in consequence of the minority or lunacy of their landlords. They have granted to them a series of seven years' leases which are really nominal, the object being to keep a legal grip on the property until it shall pass into the hands of a properly qualified owner. The Board of Works has positively refused to recognize this class of tenants as tenants for the purposes of these loans; they have refused to advance them any money. I contend that that is a very harsh course of action; because it should be remembered you are not advancing the money to a man; you are advancing it to the land; and if the money is advanced the Engineer to the Board of Works has to certify that it is properly and judiciously sunk in the land. I hope the Government will look to it, and deal with this matter from a common-sense point of view. We all know that the moment an attempt is made to disturb any of these tenants, or to treat them other than in the ordinary way, it is at once recognized that they have just as good a title as any other tenants. I do, Sir, think that this is a matter of some importance. I have got letters from several of these tenants enclosing letters from the Secretary to the Public Works Board refusing to make the loans, because he says that they have not a sufficient tenure of their land, or a sufficient security. Now, that is owing to the technical points to which I have drawn attention—namely, that they hold under seven years' leases. I have no doubt that there may be other points in which injustice is done; but I would ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury if he will kindly inquire into this matter, and if the law be elastic enough to cover this class of cases, will he give instructions that loans be granted to such tenants? To my mind, the Board of Works are interpreting the law too strictly. I think the money should be advanced to those tenants who are desirous of improving their land. The land will be a security for the Board of Works, the same as other land is taken as security. Money cannot be pocketed by these men; they cannot run away with it. It can only be advanced under a certificate of the Engineer of the Board of Works that it is properly sunk in the land; and therefore I trust that the Government will give attention to this important matter.

MR. JACKSON: My attention has been drawn to this subject generally, although not to particular cases. We think that the Board of Works are hampered by having to comply with certain conditions. The hon. Member has spoken about seven years' leases. I do not think that the Board of Works have power to lend money to tenants who have only seven years' leases.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: It is only technically that they have seven years' leases.

MR. JACKSON: Well, I am afraid it is impossible for the Board to lend the money in such a case; but I will cause inquiries to be made.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I rise in consequence of the few remarks which fell from my hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar). I also should like to make use of that Paul Pry-like apology for having only just popped in, and hope I do not intrude. But I wish to refer to the Cork and Coachford Tramway, because I have received a request from several of my constituents to giving attention to this matter. I think it is very unfair for my hon. Friend to couple the Cork and Coachford Tramway with that foolish switchback line—the Schull and Skibbereen Tramway. ["Oh, oh!"] Yes; I say it is a switchback line. Its gradients are something absurd; it is an up-and-down arrangement. I once or twice drove alongside when it was in course of construction, and I saw at the time that it would not work. Several remarks have been very properly made this evening in reference to the money advanced for that tramway. Practically speaking, it was in consequence of the action of the Grand Jury that the line was hurriedly pushed to completion, and I hope that a similar course will not be followed in connection with the Cork and Coachford Line. When I was there last autumn, Mr. Courtney, I took the opportunity of driving over a portion of the line which was very nearly ready for the Government Inspector. He had not been down at that time; but it seemed to me that the line was very well laid down so far as I could see superficially; and since it has been opened great numbers of people have been availing themselves of this route to Blarney. The line has taken great numbers there. Unfortunately, it is in connection with the Cork and Coachford Tramway. Some people have been trying on a little job. I find that some private grounds at Blarney, which used to be open there to the public, are now only opened subject to an impost; and that, I think, is a reason why the hon. Gentleman should be cautious in advancing loans to tramways, because he may find that the people who are the supervisors of the line—the baronial directors are put on in consequence of a job—that they are elected, not by the votes of the tenant farmers, who have to look after every penny in these times of depression, and who, after all, have to pay for this land; but they are elected for interested motives. I see in this case one of the baronial directors was appointed by the men who owned land in the vicinity of the tramway. I do hope that the hon. Gentleman will look into this matter before he advances any more money. Now, Sir, in connection with this Cork and Coachford Tramway there is one point to which I should like to call attention, and that is the actual appointment of these baronial directors. One of those appointed is a gentleman who has spent the major portion of his life in the bush of Australia; but a gentleman left him a large sum of money, and therefore he came back home. He knows nothing whatever about tramways; and his colleague, I think, is a gentleman known as Mr. Hussey Townsend, whose appointment was a perfect job. I do not propose to trespass much further upon the attention of the Committee; but I think we are bound to draw attention to this matter, as the hon. Gentleman has told us he has advanced £2,000 to this tramway. But I ask him if he will look into this matter, and get some satisfactory assurance that in future the proper men shall be appointed to look after the interests of the ratepayers? I differ from the remarks of my hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan. I think when there is any new railway or any new public work undertaken which may be of benefit to the country, it is very unwise indeed to go and make an attack upon it, without having sufficient grounds to justify the attack. I think my hon. Friend was extremely unwise in his remarks as to the tenant farmers having plenty of money to invest in schemes of this sort. I know most of the people in my own district; and I can certainly say that, owing to the way in which they have been robbed by the landlords, it would be utterly impossible for them to invest any money in these undertakings.

Mr. HOOPER (Cork, S.E.): At this late hour I do not propose to detain the Committee at any length; but I wish to make an appeal to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, and I hope he will pay a little attention to what I am going to say. It is an appeal in reference to a matter affecting one of our great industries in Ireland—namely, the fishing industry; and I wish especially to refer to the pier in course of erection at Kinsale. This work was undertaken under the Kinsale Harbour Act of 1880. I would ask the attention of the hon. Gentleman to a few figures which I am about to quote in order to strengthen the line which I intend to take up. I wish to ask him for a reduction of the amount of interest which has to be paid in this case. I am informed that it is 5 per cent, and that I think is a monstrously high rate of interest, because the money has been advanced for a work of national utility. The original estimate of expenditure was £16,000, to be made up by a grant of £7,500, a loan of £6,500, and contributions from the locality of £2,000; but it has now been ascertained that the sum which will have to be expended on the pier is about £18,000, and the difference between this and the original estimate will have to be made up by the locality. But I should like to call attention to the fact that the yearly instalments actually exceed the local revenue of the harbour on which this charge is made, and for the past year the locality has had to bear a deficiency to the amount of something like £100. This is due to the fact that the harbour revenue has declined in the past few years. It has declined from £835 in 1884 to £622 in 1886—a reduction of over £200. Now, I ask the hon. Gentleman to consider this fact; and in the face of this diminishing revenue and increasing liability on account of the loan, does he not think it desirable, and of urgent necessity, that some reduction should be made in the unusual rate of interest—5 per cent—which is charged for the loan? The words in the Act of Parliament are that the interest to be charged shall be at the rate of 3½ per cent, or such other figure as Her Majesty's Treasury shall fix, in order to secure the Public Revenue from loss. The hon. Gentleman is, of course, aware that in works of public utility, such as artizans' dwellings and matters of that description, which are of great advantage to the population, the Treasury consent to grant loans at the rate of £3 2*s*. 6*d*; and, therefore, seeing that 5 per cent is charged in this case, I think the matter deserves the careful attention of the hon. Gentleman. And I make this appeal with greater reason from the circumstances of the time. This Government, which, when assuming power, made a considerable flourish on the subject of the development of Irish resources, ought to consider the case of Kinsale. Kinsale Pier was started for the advantage of what is one of the great industries of the South of Ireland; but it was not alone for the advantage of the local fishermen—it was for the advantage of quite 400 ships, one-half of which certainly come from Scotland and the Isle of Man. On that account the Kinsale Pier question has far wider than a local aspect; and I ask the hon. Gentleman, bearing in mind that the Government have decided that £50,000 shall be appropriated in developing the material resources of Ireland, to consider whether this charge of 5 per cent is not an unjust imposition in a work of national utility, and in face of the circumstance that it presses unduly on the resources of the locality? It taxes a locality which has a rapidly declining revenue, owing to the recent adverse seasons. I would ask him whether he cannot, at any rate, reduce the charge to 4 per cent? I do not ask the hon. Gentleman to give his answer at once; I merely appeal to him to look into the facts of the case, and say whether it is not one of the most meritorious which have been brought under his notice for a considerable time? I trust that he will soon communicate with the authorities of the harbour and pier of Kinsale in the manner which we desire.

MR. JACKSON: To what does the hon. Gentleman refer to in regard to the works he mentions?

MR. HOOPER: I refer to the Kinsale Harbour Act of 1880.

MR. JACKSON: As I understand the matter, the Act empowers the Treasury to charge 3½ per cent; but it is not necessarily to be 3½ per cent. I shall, however, be very glad to look into the question.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I observe in the Report of the Board of Works relative to Howth Harbour a statement to the effect that—

> "The roads and piers and wharves of this harbour have been kept in good repair during the past year, and we had a steam dredger at Kingston put in perfect order to be in readiness if so directed."

I would ask if that would not bring the question of these works at Howth Harbour within this Vote?

THE CHAIRMAN: The question of these works comes under the Vote in Class I., which deals with the work done under the Board of Works to the harbour referred to.

MR. CLANCY: But the Board of Works speaks of the dredger being put in perfect order to be in readiness if so directed, and I would submit that that would bring the matter under the purview of this Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have told the hon. Member that the matter is properly one which comes under the Vote in Class I.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): But this Report of the Board of Works says — "The roads and piers and wharves of this harbour have been kept in good repair durng the past year," which, no doubt, comes under the Effective Vote of the past year; but it also says—"We had a steam dredger at Kingston put in perfect order and readiness if so directed." This, I think, shows that my hon. Friend is correct in supposing that this particular charge comes within the present year's Estimate.

The CHAIRMAN: But there are two Votes, one of them being for the works done by the Board of Works, and the other—that which is now under consideration—which deals with the question of loans made by the Board of Works. The matter the hon. Gentleman has alluded to is one that comes under the first of these headings, and ought to be considered in the Vote under Class I.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The salary of the Inspectors and officers falling under this Vote, would not my hon. Friend be right in speaking of the action of the officers under the Vote?

The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the discussion could be taken under this Vote. Where there is a separate Vote dealing with a point thus raised, the discussion must be taken under that Vote.

Mr. CLANCY: Well, then, I would ask the indulgence of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the hon. Gentleman that the other Vote has not been taken; and therefore it would not be desirable for him to ask for indulgence from the Committee.

Vote *agreed to.*

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I should like to ascertain at this juncture whether hon. Members below the Gangway opposite would be willing to proceed with Class III.? The first Vote is for Law Charges, to which I apprehend there can be no objection.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: There would be no objection to taking the Admiralty Court Registry Vote, No. 24, the Registry of Judgments Vote, No. 26, and the Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum Vote, No. 33.

Class III.—Law and Justice.

(3.) £785, to complete the sum for the Admiralty Court Registry, Ireland.

(4.) £1,388, to complete the sum for the Registry of Judgments, Ireland.

(5.) £3,630, to complete the sum for the Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum, Ireland.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report these Resolutions to the House."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Mr. CLANCY: May I ask in what order the remaining Votes will be taken?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: In the order in which they stand in the Estimates.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: There is a matter I would call attention to in relation to the Vote with regard to the breeding of horses. If that could be taken some time to-morrow it would suit the convenience of many Members.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: It might be taken at an early hour, provided it will only ocupy a short time. In that case, I will endeavour to promote the convenience of hon. Members.

Mr. CLANCY: At this hour of the night it would hardly be right to take the Public Buildings Vote.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: We do not propose to take it now. If hon. Members will undertake that it shall not be discussed for more than half-an-hour, I shall be willing to take it, as I have just said, at an early hour.

Mr. CLANCY: I know of only two points that are likely to be discussed, and one very obvious one is that in reference to the Chief Secretary's Office.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I shall not object to its being taken now, if hon. Members think it can be disposed of.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): Will the right hon. Gentleman say when will the Allotments Bill be taken?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I should not be in Order in answering that question at this moment.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it intended to take the Supplementary Vote to-morrow?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND) (Mr. A. J. Balfour), (Manchester, E.): I will take it after Class III.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: It can hardly be taken to-morrow.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I understood the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Clancy) was desirous that we should take the Public Buildings Vote now, and; if so, there is no objection to that course being adopted.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.): It is very hard to arrive at any agreement with the right hon. Gentleman. The other day I offered him four Bills for one miserable Bill, and he would not accept; and now he wants to monopolize all the time of the House. I now put it to the right hon. Gentleman in all seriousness to allow Progress to be reported.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(6.) £114,662, to complete the sum for Public Buildings, Ireland.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): The Government could not expect this Vote to be passed without some reference to one or two of the points involved, because if no question should be raised it would imply that everything was satisfactory in this Department; whereas the very reverse is the fact. I refer especially to the condition of Howth Harbour. The pier which has been erected, instead of being the chief protection to the harbour, has been not only no protection, but an injury to it. It has been contended over and over again that this pier has been the chief cause, or one of the chief causes, of the silting up of the harbour, and, consequently, of why the harbour is less fitted for the purposes it is intended to serve than it was 20 years ago. The Report, to which I have previously referred, speaks of a steam dredger for the deepening of the harbour, which dredger is to be kept in readiness, if so directed; and I want to know whether anything is to be done to improve the present condition of the harbour, which is disgraceful? In the evidence given by a gentleman well known in Ireland as a Conservative—Judge Boyd—one who has, with great credit to himself, for a number of years taken a strong interest in the welfare of the Howth fishermen, that gentleman stated in reference to this subject, at a public inquiry held by the Fishery Commissioners, that the state of the harbour was so bad that it was utterly useless for any purpose. Even a rowboat can hardly get in or out of the harbour at low tide, while ordinary fishing-boats, have to lie outside or inside the harbour, as the case may be, for some three or four hours until the tide comes in. Such is the present state of the harbour; and what we contend is that that condition is due to the action of the Board of Works itself, in two ways—first of all, because 20 years ago, when the harbour was to have been improved, it was done in the most imperfect manner; and, in the second place, they have made a pier which, instead of affording protection against the sea or the silting up of the harbour, has actually facilitated the silting up, and prevented it from being a Harbour of Refuge in bad and stormy weather for the fishing people. I think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary (Colonel King-Harman) will bear me ont in saying that the present condition of Howth Harbour is, in reality, that which has led to the present condition of the fishing industry and the declining number of the fishermen of Howth. Steamers used formerly to come there for the fish; but now they cannot get inside, and the consequence is that the prices have gone down through increased competition, and the fishermen have suffered the greatest loss and inconvenience. There is a statement in this year's Report of the Irish Fishery Inspectors, to the effect that although the fish harvest last year was very abundant, it was of little or no use to the unfortunate fishermen, in consequence of the low price of the fish. That being so, I think we are entitled to ask the Government to complete the work they undertook, and make this harbour, under the arrangement for which they were themselves responsible, more fit for the purposes it is intended to serve than it is at the present time. As an additional ground for some relief being afforded to the fishermen in regard to this matter, I may mention that about 20 years ago a toll was levied on the fishing-boats at Howth; and it was stated, in an inquiry which took place at that time, that the revenue from that toll amounted to £600 a-year. Well, there is a sum of £300 or £400 a-year that is voted by this House for the maintenance of the harbour; and, in addition to this, there is the £600 a-year from tolls, and it is now stated that the Board of Works have not got in their hands as much as would clean out the harbour once every five or 10 years. I want to know where the £600 a-year goes to? As far as I can see, it is not expended on the harbour. All the expenditure on the harbour, as far as I can find in the Estimates, are the salaries paid to the Master and Deputy Master of the harbour, and any sums of money more scandalously applied I have never heard of. The Harbour Master is a retired naval officer, and he receives £150 a-year for doing absolutely nothing, the fact being that his duties permit him to live about two miles away from Howth; while the Deputy Master, who receives another salary, has to discharge duties of so light and unimportant a character that he can afford to be away every day of the week but one. This, in itself, is a scandal that ought to be removed. It is quite plain that the duties of the Harbour Master might be committed to a man who would perform them for £1 or 30*s.* a-week; and, in that case, the balance of the money would be sufficient, after a few years, to conduct all those dredging operations that are absolutely necessary for the harbour. What, I ask again, is the meaning of that passage in the Report which states that there is at Kingstown a steam-dredger put in perfect order, so as to be in readiness if so directed? Is this intended as a joke? If it be, the Board of Works might have employed their time in a much better way; and if it be not a joke, then I ask what is it the Board propose to do? Certainly the matter is urgent. I have explained, as briefly as I can, that the condition in which Howth Harbour is now placed has led to a great deal of misery in Howth; that the want of access to the harbour has banished customers and lowered the price of fish, because there is not sufficient competition. The Liverpool boats would come if they could, but they cannot get there, and the consequence is that there are few buyers for the fish. This constitutes a state of things to which Her Majesty's Government might be invited to pay attention. Here is a material grievance, capable of being remedied; and as the grievance is one which the Board of Works have themselves occasioned, I contend that Her Majesty's Government are bound to apply a remedy at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I desire to support my hon. Friend in expressing a hope that Her Majesty's Government may do something in the direction he has indicated. I have had many conversations with Judge Boyd on the matter; and, as everyone knows, he takes the greatest possible interest in the welfare of the fishing population. He has described to me, in a way that would almost make a horse laugh if it could be told to him, what has been done towards the filling of this harbour. Why will the English Government do these foolish things? All I can say is that if I could get 5 per cent on the job, I would undertake to run Ireland for half the money Her Majesty's Government expend upon it. Here is the Harbour of Howth lying adjacent to the City of Dublin, where fish is of some importance, and yet there is not a real, substantial boat-load comes into Dublin more than once a month, and all because you let the harbour silt up, and allow the money intended for its improvement to be humbugged away by gentlemen connected with the Board of Works. I hope the Treasury will say that they will take this matter in hand, and, at any cost, endeavour to effect the desired improvement.

The SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): It is, no doubt, very difficult to satisfy hon. Members who take an interest in works in a particular district that expenditure has been sufficient in quantity, or efficient in its application.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Give us the money, and we will spend it for ourselves.

Mr. JACKSON: Well, I am quite sure if the hon. and learned Member had the direction of the expenditure the work would be properly done. In regard to Howth Harbour there has been considerable expenditure, and I do not think the hon. and learned Member has quite done justice to the Board of Works. We have had a great deal of correspondence on the subject, and the Board express the greatest confidence in the work done.

Mr. CLANCY: Where is the result?

Mr. JACKSON: Well, there is the whole secret. If we are correctly informed, the local fishery has fallen off, not because of any fault with the harbour works at Howth, but because the herrings have left that part of the coast and gone elsewhere, and no amount of expenditure, I am afraid, will influence their movements. I am quite ready to admit this harbour is of considerable importance; and though it may be, and very probably is, true that there is no very deep water at low tide, that is only the condition of many harbours in England and Scotland, into which vessels cannot enter at low tide. I believe it is intended to make further progress with the work of dredging the harbour. The Commissioners assure me that the sea-wall erected is standing the test wonderfully well, and that there is a certain scour going on that is improving the condition of the harbour, and, except for some slight silting up at one end of the wall, they have every reason to be satisfied with the work that has been done. With reference to the dredging of the harbour, I shall be glad to call their attention to it, with the idea of improving it as far as they can, and I will inquire into the funds to which reference has been made, and endeavour to have the dredging operations carried out.

MR. CLANCY: It is no matter what the Board of Works may say; they or anybody else tell you lies if they say the sea-wall is doing any good to the harbour at Howth. It is the unanimous testimony of all who are practically acquainted with the harbour that this wall is the chief cause of injury to it. It is simply a fashionable promenade; it has been concreted all over, and big stones are rolled over it into the harbour in stormy weather. I have myself seen at high tide stones, shingle, and sand rolled into the harbour over the smooth concrete of which the Board of Works are so proud. In truth, it is the general opinion that the harbour would be better without the wall. [*Laughter.*] The hon. Gentleman laughs incredulously; but what I say is not an exaggeration, as the fishermen will tell you. Judge Boyd would tell you that he had to take his yacht out of the harbour.

MR. JACKSON: Surely, not on account of the sea-wall.

MR. CLANCY: Yes; certainly. There is absolutely more sand and shingle gets into the harbour than if the wall were not there. Its former condition was that of a big, rough sea-wall, with rough stones, which served as a sort of breakwater; but now that the top has been made smooth the waves roll shingle over it, and big stones come over it like balls at every storm. The hon. Gentleman says the decline of the herring fishery is due to the decrease in the number of fish. That is an old pretence; we have heard all that before. It is well known that the fishing industry declines at one time, and revives at another. Does the hon. Gentleman expect us to believe that it will be quite time enough to go on with the works when the fishing revives, and when there are 200 fishing vessels outside waiting to get into the harbour? Do you expect the work to be done in five days or five minutes? It is not an argument which a sensible person, with knowledge of the facts, will listen to. Will not the hon. Gentleman give a straightforward answer? What does this memorandum mean? Is this dredger spoken of kept in readiness at Kingstown in expectation of funds going to be voted? What does it mean?—

> "In anticipation of funds being made available for the harbour, we have caused a dredger to be in readiness at Kingstown to commence work if so directed."

Are any funds to be made available; or is it a statement merely to deceive myself and others who may be interested? If the hon. Gentleman does not give us some assurance that the work of dredging the harbour, for which the Government and the Board of Works are responsible, shall be carried out, I promise to give him as much trouble as ever I can on this subject.

MR. JACKSON: I hope the hon. Member does not think that whether he gives me much or little trouble it will make any difference in the discharge of my duty. I should be sorry to suppose he thinks that would make the slightest difference. I shall do all I can to meet the just demands of the question, and what I believe to be the object of hon. Members. The hon. Member refers to the dredging; and it is only fair to the Board of Works to say that it is not their fault that the money has not been voted for the purpose; they have already made application for it; but the Treasury said they could not ask for a Supplementary Estimate on this account, and replied that the application must be made next Session, when, I suppose, it will be dealt with.

MR. CLANCY: Is it to be put in the Estimates next year?

MR. JACKSON: Undoubtedly, it is the intention of the Government and the Board of Works that there shall be a Vote on next year's Estimates. I think hon. Members may accept my belief of that intention; and, indeed, I may go so far as to ask them to accept my assurance that it is the intention of the Government to consider it with a view to asking a Vote next year.

MR. CLANCY: If, in my concluding remarks, I said anything calculated to wound the susceptibilities of the hon. Gentleman I wish to withdraw it; but it has been our experience, in regard to Irish matters, that the more we hammer away at grievances the more is the Government likely to listen to us. Too long we took things easily, sending an humble begging petition to this or that Department; but, as we kicked up no row, we received no relief. I hope I am not wrong now in assuming that an Estimate will be laid before us next year in respect to this object. I do not demand that the whole of the money should be spent in one year; but a beginning ought to be made next year in the necessary work of dredging the harbour. Do I understand that is the intention?

MR. JACKSON: Yes.

MR. T. M. HEALY: No one is more willing to admit than I am the admirable manner in which the hon. Gentleman discharges his duty as Financial Secretary to the Treasury; but even if we allow the credit he takes to himself for rectitude in his Office, yet rectitude is often improved by a little pressure. There are two questions I wish to raise on this Vote, and the first has reference to the quarters of the married Constabulary in Phœnix Park. We had a pledge from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) when he was Secretary that the erection of the married men's quarters should be stopped; but by some fluke during the Parliamentary interregnum these hideous structures disfiguring the Park "rose like an exhalation." The Park is so occupied with police barracks, houses for the Lord Lieutenant, the Chief Secretary, the Under Secretary, the Hibernian School, and the ground is reserved for polo, for hunting, cricket, and all kinds of things, that if the appropriations of space go on there will soon be no room for the significant but humble primrose to raise its head. Well, you had a Vote last year for these married men's quarters, and here, again, is an item of £3,400 for the same purpose. Cannot you stop voting them money? They have their quarters; they are in complete working order; and I cannot understand what this expenditure can be for—it is a specimen of what goes on all over Ireland. With a quarter of the money spent on these ridiculous married men's quarters we could have done some good. Why not hand over the disposal of Irish expenditure to a Grand Committee of Irish Members? Suppose it costs £6,000,000 to run Ireland, why not say to such a Committee carve this out to meet your requirements for Ireland? I think it would be a reasonable thing to imitate the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington—who has a separate Committee for inquiry into the expenditure of the Services, which, if I were an Englishman, I would not wish to see cut down—to refer these Irish Votes to a Committee. Then there is an item for the Chief Secretary's residence. We have had £420 for his coals, and now here is a sum of £900 for his Lodge and Garden. The Chief Secretary does not use it as a residence, and I understand he has sublet it to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. I am told that the Lord Chancellor is living in the Lodge. I do not grudge him that; he has my best wishes wherever he lives; and if he lodges there at the expense of the Chief Secretary, or if the latter chooses to let lodgings, I am quite willing—but why should we have to pay this? I may be entirely mistaken; but it is common gossip in Dublin that the Chief Secretary's Lodge is now in the occupation of the Lord Chancellor. If the Chief Secretary will not live in Ireland, then, why, in the name of Heaven, should we pay for his residence? I will not grudge him £420 for his coals, though I should like to know how much of this expenditure really goes up the chimney, and how much into the contractor's pocket; but why £900 for the Lodge? And then I come to another item for our old friend the Ulster Canal, contingent on the passing of the Ulster Canal Bill. Now, I protest against this grant to the Lagan Navigation Company; and I ask the Government, have they any expectation of passing this Canal Bill? It has been read a first time, and it now stands for second reading on the 2nd September, with a block against it in the name of my hon. Friend the Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar), who was never known to take off a block in all his life. There is, further, a note in italics against the Bill, that it is to go before a Select Committee. Now, have you the slightest hope of getting the Bill through? If I move the discharge of the Bill, is there any reason why you should say no to it? And yet you vote £12,000 on account of this proposal—that is the total; for this year it is £3,000. Is it not absurd? What are you going to do with it? You cannot get your Bill, and this money will be thrown away. Why not promise to move the discharge of the Ulster Canal Bill, and reduce this Vote by £3,000?

MR. JACKSON: With regard to the first question of the hon. and learned Member, the quarters for married men, the hon. and learned Member says he had a promise from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) that the work should be stopped; but I believe at the very time the right hon. Gentleman made that promise, if promise it was, he was under some misapprehension—the work had begun under contract, and I had no power to stop it.

MR. CLANCY: Do not give the money.

MR. JACKSON: That would be simply throwing away the money already spent; hardly a wise policy to pursue. Therefore I am afraid I cannot do anything in regard to that.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The place is occupied; it is full of police; and little children of all ages have been there for 12 months past.

MR. JACKSON: The item, I think, is £3,400, and I suppose that is for work under the contract that will come in course of payment during the present year.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It is finished.

MR. JACKSON: It may be finished now; but hon. Members must bear in mind that this includes expenditure from the 31st March last.

MR. CLANCY: It was finished long before March.

MR. JACKSON: Then, I am afraid I cannot answer the question, for then it would not come into the payments for this year.

MR. CLANCY: It is most incomprehensible.

MR. JACKSON: Then the hon. and learned Member refers to the Chief Secretary's Lodge, and seems to think that £900 is too large an amount. Well, it is an expensive place to keep up. Then the hon. and learned Member made some joke about the coals. This allowance was fixed a long time ago, and I expect it really represents a great deal besides actual coal. And now as to the Ulster Canal. I hope the hon. and learned Member does not think that if the Bill does not pass this money will be spent? If the Bill does not pass the expenditure will not be incurred, and the money will return to the Exchequer; so in any case there will be no waste of the £3,000.

MR. CLANCY: Cannot you wait until you actually want it?

MR. T. M. HEALY: It is contingent upon the Bill passing, and have you the slightest hope of that?

MR. JACKSON: Well, I have had that hope, and still I do not relinquish all hope. The hon. Member for West Cavan (Mr. Biggar), I know, is very tenacious when he blocks a Bill; but I have heard this Bill urged very strongly, and, no doubt, so far as the Government are concerned, it would be a considerable economy if the Canal were handed over to the Lagan Navigation. From the Treasury point of view, it would be a reduction of expenditure if they were in a position to hand it over to the Lagan Navigation, where it might serve a useful purpose and they would be definitely relieved of an expenditure that attaches to their responsibility.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I think we really cannot leave this matter where it is. I will throw over the married men's quarters and the Chief Secretary's Lodge; but I must stick to this. Here is the Government going to devote £5,000 to the drainage of the Bann, and remember the Bann drains from Lough Neagh into the sea and this Canal cannot be kept up if Lough Neagh is reduced below a certain level, as reduced it must be, if the Lower Bann is to be drained, if the drainage is to prevent the valley being flooded. So you lower the level of Lough Neagh and the Canal runs dry. See how you are playing at cross purposes. What the English Government are doing I cannot understand. You propose to drain the Lower Bann, and you also vote money to keep up the Canal, which depends upon and cannot be kept up without the Lough being at a certain level. So you vote money for one purpose, and more money for another purpose in opposition to the first; and therefore it is that we are kept here on the 2nd September to fight the Ulster Canal Bill, when the Lord knows we have quite enough to keep us here without that. I invite the First Lord of the Treasury to include this Bill in his sentence of massacre. If it passes its second reading, it is to be referred to a Select Committee. Can anything be more absurd? You expect to refer this Bill to a Hybrid Committee; you send out your notices, and I suppose you will have over Mr. Grey Vesey Porter and others, and the House is to be kept waiting while the Committee debate the scheme. Let us have a decided statement. I will forego all objection to the amount for the Chief Secretary's Lodge and his coals, and to the married men's quarters; but take out this £3,000 and move the discharge of the Canal Bill. It is out of the question to keep us here to discuss the Bill, and it is impossible to let this Vote pass.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I hope the Government will not altogether accept the view of my hon. and learned Friend as entirely correct, but will have some regard to that commercial opinion interested in the passage of the Bill.

Mr. BIGGAR: This proposition to lend money to the Ulster Canal is exactly the same sort of thing, though on a smaller scale, as the land reclamations in County Clare. It has cost the British taxpayer £130,000, and not a penny has been repaid, and now comes the question of lending £3,000 more to be continued in instalments for many years to come. If you agree to this, you create vested interests that will make it impossible without paying compensation to properly drain the Bann Valley, and the loss by want of drainage is many times greater than any value that can possibly arise from the Ulster Canal. The trade along the Canal could not compete with the railway. In addition to that, two Commissions have been appointed—namely, that of which the present Lord Derby was Chairman, and which reported very strongly against this scheme; and the fresh Commission of this year, which, I suppose, will also report against it. It seems to me to be a foolish thing to appoint a Commission to inquire into a particular case, and then, before you have a Report, to commit yourself to unlimited expenditure.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I must ask the Committee to allow this Vote to be passed this evening. I must remind the hon. Gentleman who has just made an interesting statement with reference to this particular matter that a Bill has been before the House for a very long time; that the measure was introduced by our Predecessors, and not by ourselves; and that we are simply trying, to the best of our ability, to carry out the pledge given by the previous Administration. We are asked to give up the Bill; but we are not greatly disposed to make concessions at this time, in view of the progress made in Committee, and we will consider to-morrow what we shall do with the Bill.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: As far as I am concerned, I have nothing to reproach myself with in regard to my action in Committee of Supply. I do urge the Government to say that this Ulster Canal Bill shall not be proceeded with this Session. No doubt, there are a certain number of people who are interested in it. You could not take away a dunghill without finding that there were a certain number of people who were interested in the smell. Of course, there are people who have a vested interest in the Canal, and they make representations to the Government. But I am surprised that the English Government—the Government of hard-headed men that we hear so much about—should spend all this money on this rat-hole. I remember, when I first came into the House, describing the Canal as not being large enough to swim a kinkin in, and things are now exactly in the same position as they were then. The Government ask us to allow this Vote to be passed; but they will not extend the Allotments Bill to Ireland, or pass the Belfast Bill, or do anything for us. It is not fair, under these circumstances, to accuse us of being unreasonable. I ask the Government, on this 1st day of September, 1887, to state that they will drop this Ulster Canal Bill. They have no hope of passing it. They have already yielded to the Orange faction of this House on the questions of Irish Land, Irish Government, and affairs in Belfast, and I would warn them that this Orangeism may in the end cost them a little too much.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I told the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) that we would state this afternoon what course we would take with regard to the Bill. My reason for saying so is that we cannot say whether my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who has been obliged to retire, owing to excessive fatigue, has made any pledge by which the Government is bound.

MR. CLANCY: The item respecting furniture, which caused us to postpone the Vote, still remains unexplained. I find that £2,100 is put down for furniture for the Dublin Castle residence, £300 for the Chief Secretary's Lodge, £150 for the Under Secretary's Lodge, and so on. I could understand these sums being wanted once for furnishing the houses; but I cannot understand why they should be required every year. I would ask the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) whether £2,100 is required every year for the Castle?

MR. JACKSON: No, Sir; £2,100 is not wanted every year for the furniture of the Castle. I have obtained the details for this year, and I find that, of the £2,100, a very considerable portion is for items not likely to occur again.

MR. CLANCY: A considerable sum is voted every year.

MR. JACKSON: Yes; and I am afraid that a considerable sum will always be voted; because the Vote is not for furniture alone, but includes other things, such as painting.

MR. CLANCY: The hon. Gentleman is mistaken. Under the head of "Supplies and Maintenance," there is a Vote of £2,300.

MR. JACKSON: I am quite aware of that; but this year there has been transferred to the item of furniture, so-called, a considerable sum which formerly appeared in the item to which the hon. Member has called attention. I believe that £500 or £600 was so transferred, because it was thought it more properly came under this item.

MR. CLANCY: What is the money for?

MR. JACKSON: Well, it includes decorating and covering chairs, and it also includes dismantling and pulling down. It further includes housekeepers' and housemaids' salaries, and a great many other things. It appears that there is certain inside decoration done periodically at the Castle, and that this is the year when it is done. It costs probably about £2,000.

MR. CLANCY: Will you explain what the "maintenance" item is for?

MR. JACKSON: I am afraid I have not the particulars about the maintenance. It appears that the £3,700 includes the cost of certain things which will not again be necessary. There is an item of about £200 or £300 which, it is said, will not appear again for 15 years. [*Laughter from the Home Rule Members.*] I do not know why hon. Members should laugh.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The statutory term of 15 years.

MR. JACKSON: Well, a great many things may happen during the next 15 years. It must be borne in mind that a great many repairs have to be done to these buildings. I suppose the hon. Member will understand that a place like that is not kept up without great expenditure.

MR. CLANCY: Explain what the furniture is.

MR. JACKSON: Well, Sir, the £2,100 includes the cost of repairs and furniture of one kind or other. It includes supplies and maintenance for the outside quarters, for the Chapel Royal, for the House of the Master of the Horse, for the Chamberlain's house, for the Controller's house, for the estate-steward's house, for the stables——

MR. T. M. HEALY: Does the kettle-drummer get anything?

MR. JACKSON: And it includes furniture for all the Departments. There is, as I have said, about £500 which will not appear again. I have been through the items, and I can honestly say that the amount could not have been kept down this year. No doubt it will be lower next year.

MR. CLANCY: But for the lateness of the hour I would divide upon every item in this Vote. I consider that it is a perfect scandal. The explanation of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jackson) can hardly have satisfied himself. The idea of paying such an amount as this for the decoration of Dublin Castle, when the Government absolutely refuse to pay a single penny to clear out Howth Harbour, is a shame and a scandal.

Mr. BIGGAR: I would like to make a fresh appeal to the right hon. Gentleman on the subject to which I alluded a short time ago.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Will the hon. Gentleman allow me to interrupt him for a moment? I wish to say that we will announce the course we will take at 4 o'clock to-morrow afternoon, and, if the Vote for £3,000 is not required we shall move to reduce it on Report.

Mr. BIGGAR: What I say is, that the whole argument is that the present Government are acting upon an arrangement made by their Predecessors. Now, I think that, after all, that is a weak argument, because nothing has taken place which amounts to a contract, or even amounts to an understanding, as to the course which would be taken. I am really sick at heart to see what has happened with regard to money in cases of this kind. I think it is time that the Government should put a perfect stop to this system, which is really a scandal. My theory is that the Government might lend money at low interest on first-class security, but that they should not lend money on any pretence upon these shallow securities.

Dr. TANNER: I am unable to support my hon. Friends in what they have said respecting the Ulster Navigation Bill. I have been over these works; I have ridden on the Canal; and I can tell my hon. and learned Friend the Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) that it is not only able to swim a kin-kin, but to bear a boat. I think that when the Canal exists, and when there is a possibility of handing it over to any Corporation which will take care of it, there is no reason why the Government should not advance a certain sum of money in order to benefit the locality. If it was doing a very great deal of harm, the Government would be sure to be waited upon by deputations, and to have a large number of remonstrances addressed to them from the localities. I think that if this Ulster Canal were opened up and dredged, and made fit for carrying canal boats, it would be very useful for such purposes as the conveyance of coal, and I do not see why it should not be made use of. It has been allowed to fall into disrepair, and, of course, the upper portion is not at the present time in a fit state for canal boats; but I do not see why it could not be made fit. If this Navigation Company would take it over, I really think it is a very rational undertaking, and that the claim ought to be supported. I sincerely hope, therefore, that the Government will see their way to vote this £3,000, and that they will not withdraw their Bill.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I hope, Sir, that the Committee will now at last come to a decision.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I see, Sir, that the Vote includes an item of £4,500 for some police barracks in a small country town. Although the population is very small, there are 30 police in the town. Certainly 10 men could do all that is required. The sum of £4,500 for police barracks is certainly too much. Why, it would build a palace.

Mr. JACKSON: I see that there is only £1,000 to be voted this year. I will inquire about the £4,500, and ascertain really what the cost of the barracks is.

Mr. TUITE: I wish to know whether it relates to only one building?

Mr. JACKSON: I am afraid I cannot say.

Dr. TANNER: I will take pity on the Government, and, as far as I am personally concerned, will make my remarks as short as possible. There are two subjects to which I would call attention. One is that of the Newcastle Harbour in South Down. I had occasion to visit the place not long ago, and I have been asked by my hon. Friend the Member for South Down (Mr. M'Cartan) to bring the matter forward. A great deal of money has been spent in building an artificial harbour at South Down; but a number of large blocks of granite having been employed to form the entrance, a quantity of sand has collected about them, and the result is that ships cannot get in. I would ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) whether he will see if anything can be done to remove the obstruction? The second matter to which I wish to call attention is this. A fishing pier has lately been opened at Ballycotton, in County Cork. Well, the wrong site has been chosen, because inside the pier is a whole reef of rocks on which ships have got aground on several occasions. I have been asked to call the attention of the Gentlemen in charge of the Vote to this matter.

These rocks could be easily blown away without any very great expenditure of money, and the pier would then be a very great protection to vessels which have to run into Ballycotton in stress of weather, and also a great protection to fishing boats during the bad seasons. I should have liked to bring other matters before the Government—notably, the case of Queen's College, Cork, but, as the hour is so late, I will confine my remarks to these two matters, and I will ask the Secretary to the Treasury to favourably consider them.

MR. JACKSON: Yes, Sir, I will promise to look into the matters.

Vote *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at half after Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 2nd *September*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE, Votes 21 to 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 32

Resolutions [September 1] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Deeds of Arrangement (No. 2)* [381].

Considered as amended—Third Reading—Charity Commissioners (Officers)* [362], and *passed.*

Withdrawn—Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation* [313].

QUESTIONS.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (SCOTLAND)—THE CROFTER VOTERS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) (for Dr. R. MACDONALD) (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is a fact that at Barra, on the last day previous to that on which payment of rates entitled the crofters to be put on the Register for this year, there was no collector of rates to receive their money, and in consequence thereof great numbers of those who were able and willing to pay rates were disfranchised; whether the fact of nearly 4,000 voters being disfranchised in the counties of Ross and Inverness is largely due to the bad arrangements for collecting their rates, large districts being without post office arrangements to enable the crofters to pay their rates by postal orders; whether he will take means in the near future to press upon Parochial Boards the necessity of having rate collectors in sparsely populated country districts within a reasonable distance from the abodes of the ratepayers; and, whether, in the case of tenants under £4 a-year, who have paid their rates to their landlords, but which the latter neglected to pay the collector in time to entitle the names of these tenants to be put on the Parliamentary Register, he will take such means as will prevent defaulting landlords to have it in their power to disfranchise their small tenants?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The collector for Barra, who has more than one Island in his district, went to Barra on four separate days—twice in March and twice in June—to collect rates, after giving due notice, both through the ground officer and through the priest, who announced the date of one visit in March and one in June to the congregation in church. The last of these visits was on June 24. So far as I can ascertain, no one came forward to Castlebay, the place of payment, in order to pay his rates on the last day of June. I answer the second paragraph in the negative. In answer to the third paragraph, I do not think it would be possible to have more collectors without making the expense of the collection out of all proportion to the amount collected, and would place a very serious additional burden on the ratepayers. I have not been able to ascertain that there is any ground for the suggestion in the last paragraph.

LAND (SCOTLAND)—LEASEHOLD FARMERS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) (for Dr. R. MACDONALD) (Ross and Cromarty) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the eviction of Mr. T. M. Russell, a leading farmer of East Lothian, who was made a bankrupt by his landlord, although his estate left a surplus of £500, after paying his creditors in full; and, if the Government are prepared to appoint a Commission to inquire into the position of Scotch leasehold farmers with the intention of giving them such redress as has been granted to the leaseholders of Ireland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Mr. Russell was tenant of Greendykes Farm, on the St. Germain estate, and of Dolphingston, on the Preston Grange estate. In 1885 Mr. Russell, being £1,506 in arrears—he had £902 to his credit in the bank and £767 in a promissory note for a loan to a friend—as he declined to apply these assets in liquidating his arrears of rent, the proprietors were compelled to take out sequestration, which he could have had recalled at once had he chosen to pay his rent. The Trustee, who was a personal friend of Mr. Russell's, renounced both leases with, it is believed, Mr. Russell's consent. At the close of the realization of his assets there was a balance of £500 returned to him. Since Mr. Russell was discharged, the proprietor of Dolphingston returned to him a sum of £250; and the proprietor of Greendykes expended £500 in purchasing him an annuity. The history of this case does not tend to induce Her Majesty's Government to appoint a Commission such as is suggested by my hon. Friend.

DR. CLARK: Is the Lord Advocate aware that the land had been valued by the proprietors, and found to be worth about 30 per cent less than the lease determined?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I am not aware what was the valuation of the land.

ROYAL PARKS AND GARDENS—THE TREES IN KENSINGTON GARDENS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, If he has yet taken any steps in the hope of arresting the mortality among the trees in Kensington Gardens; and if, in the Recess, he proposes to do anything beyond the cutting down of large numbers of the dead and the dying which is now going on?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): We believe that the reduction of the depth of water in the Round Pond which was effected last year has done something towards arresting the mortality among the trees in Kensington Gardens; and we are preparing for planting as much as possible during the autumn, and also, as far as we can, draining the land on which we plant.

BOARD OF TRADE (RAILWAY DEPARTMENT)—SPECIAL PROVISION FOR WOMEN TRAVELLING.

MR. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether, having regard to recent outrages upon women in railway carriages, and to the fact that the attempt to afford protection by a system of communication with the guard has proved inadequate, he will consider the advisability of imposing upon Railway Companies the obligation of providing in every train exclusive accommodation for women travelling alone, as is done in many parts of the Continent?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The Board of Trade fully recognize the importance of the question raised by my hon. and learned Friend. But, as I have often stated, the Department has no Statutory power to interfere, as the entire responsibility for all traffic arrangements rests with the Railway Companies. In view, however, of the large number of women who are daily compelled to travel alone, and of the risks to which they are exposed, as evidenced by the recent case and other similar cases, a Circular has been sent to all the Railway Companies, calling their attention to the desirability of providing in every train, for all classes, accommodation for women travelling alone. I have to-day laid a copy of that Circular on the Table of the House, and will, when the replies are received, present them. I may add that I have every belief that the Companies will do all that lies in their power to provide for the safety and convenience of women travelling on their lines.

POOR RATES (IRELAND)—DIFFICULTY OF COLLECTION.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) (for Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR) (Donegal, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he is aware that the poor rate collector at Monasterevan, in the Mountmellick Union, has for a long time had great difficulty in recovering the rates due on account of the telegraph poles and wires in his district, especially as regards the Jamestown Electoral Division, and has over and over again had to pay the rates out of his own pocket, by reason of the delay in payment by the Government; whether the cause for the delay is in the Post Office or at the Treasury; and, whether he will take steps to cause the rates to be duly paid?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that the telegraph poles and wires in these unions have undergone certain alterations which will probably affect their assessable value. Pending, however, the completion of the necessary inquiries on the subject, I have given instructions for the outstanding claims, amounting apparently to £1 0*s.* 9*d.*, which have been sanctioned by the Treasury, to be paid at once.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACT — THE CELBRIDGE BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Has the attention of the Local Government Board been drawn to the three several Resolutions of the Celbridge Board of Guardians urging the Local Government Board to send down an Inspector to report upon the scheme of labourers' cottages in that union; whether he is aware that, though the farmers of the Babraheen Division of the said union made a representation more than 20 months ago, 16 months were allowed to elapse before the Inspector held an inquiry, and five months have passed since the date of the inquiry without a Report being made; and, what steps he will take to prevent the Act becoming a dead letter in the union?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Local Government Board had received the Resolutions adopted by the Board of Guardians of the Celbridge Union. With regard to the Provisional Orders sanctioning these schemes of the Guardians, the Local Government Board were unable to take any steps until they received some necessary particulars, with which they were not furnished until a fortnight ago. The petition for a Provisional Order authorizing the erection of cottages was received about 12 months ago; but this scheme, and also three others lodged in October, were incomplete and not ready for inquiry until the end of the year. The inquiry was held in January last, and the Guardians were informed of the result in April, and several matters were pointed out which it was necessary should be attended to before the Board could make the Order. All the Orders required by the Board were not received until the 15th of August. The Local Government Board were now proceeding with the matter as quickly as circumstances would permit.

BOARD OF TRADE (RAILWAYS DEPARTMENT)—CAVAN, LEITRIM, AND ROSCOMMON LIGHT RAILWAY.

MR. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a meeting was held at Ballyconnell last week to protest against the Cavan, Leitrim, and Roscommon Light Railway being handed over to the Company in its present state, it being alleged that bridges and other portions of the work were not satisfactorily executed; whether strict inquiry will be made into these allegations before the line is certified; whether the greater portion of the capital for the making of the line has been advanced by the Board of Works, on which the ratepayers are bound by guarantee to pay five per cent interest; whether he is aware that, notwithstanding the fact that under these circumstances the line has been practically built by public money, Catholics, who form the great bulk of the ratepayers on whom the burden of the guarantee will fall, have been excluded in the making of all appointments to positions of trust and emolument; and, whether, if he finds this statement to be correct, he will make such representations to the parties responsible as will secure a fair share of the offices to those who will have to bear so much of the expense?

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth) (who replied) said: The Board of Trade have received a copy of a Resolution passed at a meeting of Cavan and Leitrim ratepayers, calling attention to alleged defects in the railway. As soon as the line is ready to be inspected, an officer will be appointed to make the necessary inspection; and his attention will be especially called to the allegation that bridges and other works are not satisfactorily executed. The Board of Trade have no information on the other points referred to in the hon. Member's Question.

Mr. HAYDEN: Will the hon. Gentleman ask for information on the other points?

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: I am afraid they do not come within the province of the Board of Trade.

LAND COMMISSION — BARONY OF LOWER DUNDALK, CO. LOUTH—FAIR RENTS.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if it is true that 50 tenants belonging to the Poor Law Division of Drumullagh, barony of Lower Dundalk, County Louth, applied to the Land Commission on 4th May last to have a fair rent fixed; and, if it is true that their cases have not yet been listed for hearing; and, if so, will he have them heard in the town of Carlingford (as the most convenient) in time to have a fair rent fixed before 1st November next (gale day)?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners inform me that 50 originating Notices were received on the 3rd of May last. A sub-Commission commenced its sittings for the County Louth on the previous day; but even if there had been time to dispose of these cases at that sitting, they could not have been listed, as the practice of the Commissioners is to give three week's notice of hearing. The next sitting for Louth has not yet been fixed, as the claims of other counties have also to be considered. When, however, it is arranged, the Commissioners will decide on the place of hearing, so as to convenience all parties as far as possible.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—RIOTOUS PROCEEDINGS AT MARKETHILL, CO. ARMAGH.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, on Saturday 27th August, 1887, an Orange drumming party marched through Markethill, County Armagh, using offensive and threatening language to the Catholics, inhabitants, and finally assaulting them with violence in their own dwellings; whether the Rev. Mr. Short, when trying to preserve the people from the violence of the invading mob, was assaulted by the Orange party; and, if he will make inquiries into the occurrence from some independent source?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Local Constabulary Authorities reported that a Protestant drumming party entered the town of Markethill on Saturday last. They did not assault any Roman Catholic inhabitants, or enter their dwellings. The Rev. Mr. Short did not complain to the police of having been assaulted; but a man named Edward Short complained of some party having challenged him and used party expressions. The drumming party also charged the Roman Catholics with having likewise used party expressions. The whole case was laid before the magistrates at Petty Sessions; and after hearing all the circumstances in open Court they directed that the police should not prosecute, as it was open to Edward Short to proceed by summons if he chose to do so.

RAILWAYS—STATE ACQUISITION OF TRUNK LINES.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, Camlachie) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, having regard to the enormous growth of taxation during recent years in inverse ratio to the condition of trade and commerce, he will, during the Recess, take into consideration the question of the acquisition of the trunk lines of railway by the State, with a view to further enhance public safety and afford greater facilities to the trading community by the establishment of a uniform administration, and as calculated to prove a large source of revenue to the country?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): No, Sir. I must frankly say that I am not prepared to consider the policy of acquiring the great trunk railways of the country for the State.

POST OFFICE—RATES OF POSTAGE FOR NEWSPAPERS—"THE MILLER."

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is a fact that the proprietor of a weekly newspaper, *The Miller*, duly authorised by the Post Office in 1877 in a certain form submitted for approval, in which it has been published for the past nine years, has received notice that the withdrawal of its registration will take place in the present month, after which the paper in question will no longer be transmitted at the halfpenny rate of postage; if he can state why this publication, consisting of current topics and of articles relating thereto, with advertisements, and being printed and published in the United Kingdom, in numbers at intervals of not more than seven days, is not entitled to the privileges of other newspapers; whether, having regard to the long usage of transmission (nearly 10 years) and under various Postmasters General, he will consider the advisability of granting a special sanction for the continuance of the terms as originally granted; and, whether the request of the proprietor for an extension of time for one year, to enable him to complete existing contracts, has been refused?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The ordinary weekly issue of *The Miller* consists of about six pages only; this passes, and will continue to pass, at a halfpenny postage. The proprietor of *The Miller* newspaper has been informed that the monthly Technical Issue of that publication, consisting of about 100 pages, will not be permitted to pass in this country as a newspaper after the end of the present month. The intention of the Legislature in passing the Act of 1870 was to make a clear distinction between weekly publications and those issued at greater intervals. I hold in my hand copies of the weekly and of the monthly issue of *The Miller*, and the House will not fail to appreciate the immense difference between them. The one is really a newspaper, the other is practically a magazine. A great concession was made in reducing the postage on newspapers; and I feel it my duty to put an end to the abuse of that concession, which would otherwise become very prevalent. Notice to the proprietor of *The Miller* was given in April last, and I have intimated to him that I must insist upon payment of the legal—that is, the book—postage after the end of this month.

MR. PICKERSGILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether it is not a fact that in 1878—that is, eight years after the Act to which he has referred was passed—*The Miller*, substantially in its present form, was registered by the Post Office Authorities?

MR. RAIKES: I do not believe *The Miller* was ever registered in its present form; but if it ever was it must have been by inadvertence.

IRELAND—HORSE BREEDING.

MR. STEPHENS (Middlesex, Hornsey) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, as the horses now bred in Ireland are acknowledged to be better than those of every other country, he will consider the advisability of transferring the public money, now granted in aid of horse breeding, to some Irish industry in a backward or undeveloped condition?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The grant of £5,000 to which the hon. Member's Question refers will be applied to the encouragement of cattle breeding as well as of horse breeding in Ireland. It is quite true that Ireland has been pre-eminent in horse breeding. It is equally certain, I regret to say, that of late years there has been a deplorable tendency to deterioration in this respect. The danger of a permanent falling-off in the quality of Irish horses and stock has been repeatedly urged upon the Government by the persons best qualified to judge; and it is in order to avert such a calamity that we are asking Parliament for this grant. The Government is extremely anxious to do everything in its power to improve the industrial resources of Ireland. But I think the hon. Member will admit that it is as important to check decay in a branch of industry for which experience has shown Ireland to be peculiarly suited, as to develop others with regard to which success is more or less problematical.

MERCHANT SHIPPING—THE LIMERICK FLOATING DOCK.

MR. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, What is the reason for the delay in replying to an application by the Limerick Harbour Board for a loan to repair damages done to Limerick floating dock; and, will the Treasury direct the immediate issue of the loan, so as to enable the Board to make these necessary repairs?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): It was found necessary to make certain inquiries as to the financial position of the Limerick Harbour Board. I understand that the reply to the inquiries of the Treasury is being sent to-day; and I hope on receipt of it to be in a position to come to a decision.

THE NEW FISHERY COMMISSION (CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES).

MR. GOURLEY (Sunderland) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is intended to refer Article 30 of the Treaty of Washington, 1871, to the New Fishery Commission, as well as the Fishery Articles of the Treaty; whether the composition and powers of the Commissioners will be in accordance with the Memorandum forwarded by the American Government on the 22nd June, 1885; whether the terms of the draft Protocol submitted by Mr. Adams to Lord Clarendon in 1866 will also form part of the reference; and, if the Alaskan Seal Fisheries disputes are also to be referred to the new Commissioners for adjustment; if not, can he state for what reason?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): It is not intended, at present, to refer to the new Fishery Commission Article 30, which relates to the passage of goods through Canada and the United States respectively, freely and without duty. The Memorandum referred to (see page 15 of Parliamentary Paper, United States, No. 1, 1887) expressed the views of the United States Government at the time. I am not prepared to say that it will limit the scope of the present reference. I may refer the hon. Member to the Marquess of Salisbury's despatch of March 24 last, at page 95 of Parliamentary Paper, United States, No. 2, 1887, for the views of Her Majesty's Government in proposing the appointment of a Commission. The full terms of reference have not yet been decided upon, and this point will receive consideration.

MR. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): Will the right hon. Gentleman have any objection to state who the other Members of the Commission are to be, in addition to the right hon. Member for West Birmingham (Mr. Chamberlain)?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: Her Majesty's Minister at Washington will be one of the other Commissioners, and the third will be a Canadian; but he has not yet been named.

LAW AND JUSTICE — ARREST AND FLOGGING OF A CHILD AT RIPLEY.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has received a Report from a Committee of County Magistrates held at Derby on 9th August, to consider the case of James Smith Buckberry, who was flogged at Ripley on 11th July; whether the magistrates have in any way censured or punished the police for their conduct in arresting the child in the middle of the night, or for the manner in which the sentence of four strokes with a birch rod was inflicted; whether he is aware that it was disclosed at the inquiry that the rod used in flogging the child had been shortened before it was shown to the magistrates; whether he is aware that two large public meetings held at Ilkeston on August 17th and 18th have, by Resolutions, protested against the punishment inflicted on James Smith Buckberry, expressed the public belief in his innocence, and demanded a further public inquiry at Ilkeston on account of the dissatisfaction felt at the place (Derby) of the magistrates' inquiry, the short notice given of it, and the refusal of the magistrates to adjourn it, in order to give time for further evidence to be brought forward; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will order a public inquiry to be held at Ilkeston, and will carefully consider any evidence submitted to him in proof of the child's innocence; and, if satisfied thereof, grant him a free pardon?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have received a full and exhaustive Report from the County Police Committee in reference to this case. They report that the arrest of so young a boy in the middle of the night was very unnecessary and injudicious; and that the case of very juvenile offenders, unless under special circumstances, might be dealt with on summons without arrest. They also state that no special instructions to that effect have been given to the police, and that the invariable practice has been to arrest in all cases of alleged felony; and, under the circumstances, they do not consider the constables were open to serious blame for the arrest. They report that they consider the charge of undue severity against the police in the infliction of the penalty has not been made out. It was proved at the inquiry that the birch rod had been shortened. I am aware that public meetings have been held as suggested. I regret that the magistrates did not find it possible to give longer notice of the inquiry, and to hold it at Ilkeston; but I find that four witnesses, including Dr. Tobin and the boy's mother, were heard on behalf of the boy, and that every material fact as to the arrest and the flogging was brought before the magistrates, so that further inquiry could throw no additional light on the case, which is ripe for judgment. I concur with the magistrates in their condemnation of the arrest; and I think it is clear that the punishment of the boy was far too severe. That seems to have been due in part to the character of the rod used and in part to the delicate state of the boy. I have already given directions for the issue of a Circular, which will, I hope, prevent any such occurrences in future; and I shall be happy to consider any evidence submitted to me in proof of the boy's innocence of the original charge.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked, Whether the right hon. Gentleman would prohibit the infliction of punishment of this kind by policemen in the absence of a magistrate or some person of position superior to that of the police?

MR. MATTHEWS: I am afraid I have no authority by law to prohibit a sentence which the Statute imposes being carried out by the Legal Authorities. All I can do is to offer recommendations to them. I have not the terms of the Circular I have issued; but it recommended in general terms that in the case of young offenders a birch rod of a certain size should be used, and that on the question of the health of the child a medical man should be consulted.

MR. CHANNING: Will some superior person be present at the time of the infliction of the punishment?

MR. MATTHEWS: The Act of Parliament does not require that. It says that the punishment is to be inflicted by some police constable.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—CONVERSION OF ENFIELD-MARTINI RIFLES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, What is the actual number of Enfield-Martini rifles which have been turned out at Enfield Lock and by private firms; what has been their actual cost; by the advice of what Committee or other skilled authority was the pattern of this arm sealed, and at what date did their manufacture finally cease; whether they are already being converted into the Martini-Henry, which they were designed to supersede; whether there is already a sufficient supply of the Martini-Henry arm now that a magazine rifle with a much smaller bore is about to be adopted; what will be the fresh cost of re-boring and re-rifling the barrel of the new Enfield-Martini to the calibre of the Martini-Henry rifle; whether any, and, if so, what, amount of ammunition has been manufactured for the use of the Enfield-Martini with its present bore; and, what other alterations, in addition to the re-boring of the barrel, will be necessary, and at what cost, to convert the Enfield-Martini rifle, as a whole, to the pattern of the older weapon?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): In answer to the first two Questions of my hon. Friend, I may say that 65,000 Enfield-Martini rifles have been completed, and others are in various stages of advancement. Their cost is estimated at £2 12*s.* per rifle. They have all been manufactured at Enfield. In answer to the third Question, the pattern was recommended by the Small Arms Committee, and it was adopted pending the introduction of a magazine rifle. In answer to the remaining Questions, I may say that as the bore of the new magazine rifle is to be less than 0·4, and as it was out of the question to have a third bore in the hands of the troops, it has now been decided to convert these rifles into Martini-Henrys, of which the supplies will not be sufficient to last until the magazine rifle can be issued. The total cost of adapting each rifle will be 6*s.* 6*d.*, and as they have the same external diameter the result will be a barrel of practically the same weight and strength as the present arm. Some ammunition has been manufactured for the Enfield-Martini rifle, but it can all be utilized without expense.

Mr. HANBURY: What other parts of the rifle besides the barrel will have to be altered?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Only a very few of them. Some of them of the earlier manufacture will have to be modified.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD—JUBILEE BONUSES—VESTRY OFFICIALS.

Mr. SHIRLEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Doncaster) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Mr. T. Cox, at the Bow Street Police Court, on Wednesday, 31st August, and the granting of Jubilee bonuses to Vestry officials out of the rates; whether such bonuses have been paid with the knowledge and consent of the Local Government Board; and, if so, in respect of what services rendered; and, whether such bonuses have ever been paid before the present year in the parishes of St. Giles-in-the-Fields and St. George, Bloomsbury?

The PRESIDENT (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The Local Government Board have not sanctioned the granting of Jubilee bonuses to Vestry officials out of the rates; and they have no knowledge that any such payments have been made, either in the present year or in past years. In a letter of a Vestryman, which appeared in *The Standard* of to-day, it is stated that no such payments have, in fact, been made to any officer or servant of the Vestry; and that the sums referred to were granted for expenses incurred under recent Statutes for services in connection with the registration of voters.

LICENSING ACTS—REFUSAL OF LICENCE AT STOWMARKET.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he is aware that the present proprietor of the "King's Head," Stowmarket, has been refused his licence, and that his predecessors, at the last licensing day, applied for a renewal in their name and obtained same, although they live out of the locality and do not in any way take part in the business, and that Johnson, the present proprietor, pays the late holders for permission to trade in their name; and, if such action is legal?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.), in reply, said, he had no information with regard to the circumstances referred to. If the facts were fully stated, they would involve in answer the expression of a legal opinion as to the action of the Licensing Authority. It was not for him to express any such opinion on the matter, and it was one that must be dealt with by the Local Authority.

THE MAGISTRACY (SCOTLAND)—THE COUNTY FISCALS AT GREENOCK.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether he is aware that the case of John M'Giveran, assaulted by a policeman at Greenock, was inquired into by the County Fiscals; whether they carry on a private practice under the title of Blair and Cameron; whether that firm represented ex-policeman Innes at the Licensing Court; and, whether the statements of the witnesses can now be obtained?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I answer the first three paragraphs in the affirmative; but I have to repeat what I stated formerly, that the case was one for the Burgh Procurator Fiscal—Mr. Auld—who investigated it at the time, and came to the same conclusion. I cannot supply the hon. Member with the statements of witnesses and precognitions.

CRIME (METROPOLIS) — BODIES OF INFANTS FOUND IN THE RIVER LEA.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that no fewer than eight bodies of infants were recovered from the River Lea during the month of August; whether special efforts have been made to ascertain under what circumstances the infants were placed in the River; and, whether he has any information on the subject which he can communicate to the House?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I have made inquiry of the Metropolitan Police, and they inform me that only two cases are known to them of children found drowned in the River Lea during the month of August. One was the case of a female child found on the 27th ultimo, in which case the verdict was "Found Drowned;" the other was of a female child found on the 29th, in which case the verdict was "Stillborn." I have no further information which I can communicate to the House.

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS)—ADMISSION OF WITNESSES TO A STATION HOUSE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What are the instructions given to the Metropolitan Police with regard to the claim of an independent witness to be admitted to a station house, in order to a make a statement in favour of a person in custody, when the latter is charged?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): There are no instructions beyond a General Police Order to the effect that persons who come to a police station as witnesses when a charge is being made are not to be taken into custody or charged with being concerned in the offence, so that there may be nothing to prevent persons from appearing who can give important evidence; and so that there may be no appearance of a desire by the police to suppress evidence in any case, especially when the charge is concerned with the conduct of the police themselves.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—WRONGOUS APPREHENSION AND IMPRISONMENT OF JOHN THOMSON AND DUNCAN LEITCH, GLASGOW.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the case of wrongous apprehension and imprisonment of two young men named respectively John Thomson and Duncan Leitch, at Whiteinch, near Glasgow, on 21st July last, on a charge of housebreaking; whether, though there was no evidence against them, they were detained in prison for 12 days; whether they were repeatedly marched through crowded thoroughfares manacled, as described by themselves in *The Glasgow Daily Mail;* and, whether, in consideration of the hardship, public exposure, and loss of employment thus entailed upon innocent young men of unstained character, he will cause a thorough and impartial investigation to be made into the conduct of the police in this case?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): This was not a case of wrongous apprehension. The police and the Public Prosecutor had before them the evidence of, at least, three respectable witnesses, who positively identified the men as having committed the crime; and the latter had no alternative but to put them on their trial, and would have failed in his duty to the public and to them had he not done so. The defence was an *alibi*, and was successful. The case was on the day of trial adjourned, at the request of the accused, in consequence of the absence of important witnesses for the defence. The necessity of the case required that they should be twice brought to the Court at Paisley from prison, and they were conveyed with as little publicity as possible. The Court House at Paisley abuts on the railway station; and in Glasgow they were conveyed by cab through the streets between the station and the prison.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE AFGHAN FRONTIER DELIMITATION—RECOGNITION OF SERVICES.

MR. COGHILL (Newcastle-under-Lyme) asked the Secretary of State for War, In what way he proposes to recognize the services of Sir W. Ridgeway, Captain A. F. Barrow, and Captain F. de Laessoe, the three officers entrusted with the negotiations for the delimitation of the Afghan frontier line, which have been brought to such a successful issue?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: In reply to the Question of the hon. Member, I would submit that it is not very desirable that statements in advance in regard to the bestowals of awards for good service should be made in Parliament. The question of the bestowal of honours in this case will receive the consideration of Her Majesty's Government as a whole.

NEW GUINEA — ANNEXATION — BRITISH SETTLEMENT ACT.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, in the event of the compliance of the Australian Colonies with the terms on which Her Majesty's Government have expressed their willingness to annex the portion of New Guinea not claimed by Germany or Holland, Her Majesty's Government propose to act on the opinion of their Law Advisers (quoted at page 136, vol. ii. of *Proceedings of the Colonial Conference*),

> "that the territory, when annexed, must be taken to have been acquired by settlement and not by conquest or cession;"

and, if they really intend to treat that territory as settled by Her Majesty's subjects, and to constitute a "British Settlement," so as to render applicable Act 23 & 24 *Vict.* c. 121, or the new British Settlements Act, in case that should be passed into law?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Sir Henry Holland) (Hampstead): The hon. Member has correctly stated the intentions of Her Majesty's Government, who in such a matter are guided by the opinion of the Law Advisers. There is no doubt that the territory of British New Guinea, over which it is intended to proclaim the Queen's sovereignty, comes fully within the terms of Sec. 1 of the Act 23 & 24 *Vict.* c. 121. As a matter of fact, for a long time past missionary, trading, and other settlements have been made on the Coast of New Guinea, and in some cases have been maintained; and, as I previously stated, any delay in establishing the Queen's sovereignty in British New Guinea would tend to cause great injury to the Natives. I may add that the British Settlements Bill gives no further powers to Her Majesty as to administration than she at present possesses under the existing Act.

In reply to a further Question by Sir George Campbell,

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, it had been stated a long time ago that Her Majesty was prepared, on certain legislation being passed by the Queensland Parliament, and an arrangement being made with the Australasian Colonies, to declare her sovereignty over British New Guinea.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL was understood to give Notice that he would oppose the Bill.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND said, the hon. Member had blocked the Bill under a false understanding altogether, as was further shown by the Notice he had just given. The Bill had nothing to do directly and specially with New Guinea; and, as he had just stated, did not confer any powers on Her Majesty that she did not already possess, except as to creating Courts of Appeal. He had already explained that in a letter to the hon. Member, and he begged him to withdraw his block.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg to ask, whether or not Her Majesty's Government under the Act propose to treat New Guinea as a British Possession?

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: Certainly, Sir.

UNITED STATES—PAUPER EMIGRANTS FROM IRELAND.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is intended to present further Papers as to the objection of the American Government to the landing of pauper emigrants from Ireland, and, can he state if any conclusion has been come to by the Government?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): There are no further Papers at the Foreign Office since the last collection laid (Parliamentary Paper, No. 3, United States, 1887). No decision has been come to yet by Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Is it true that Sir L. Sackville West has given no reply to the Marquis of Salisbury's last letter?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON said, no further letter on the matter was before the two Departments of the two Governments; and, as he had stated, no decision had been come to.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Can the right hon. Gentleman give us any idea when the further Papers will be presented?

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON: There can be no further Papers until some conclusion is arrived at; and I am unable to say what will be the course of the negotiations.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I will take the liberty of asking the right hon. Gentleman, whether the Foreign Office is in communication with the Irish Office to prevent the landing of further pauper emigrants until this question has been settled between the United States and Great Britain?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: I think I must ask the hon. and learned Member to give Notice of that Question.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN THE COLONIES—THE SEE OF NATAL.

MR. SUMMERS (Huddersfield) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, seeing that the decisions of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council show that a Bishop nominated by the Crown and consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury will be a successor to the late Bishop of Natal for all practical purposes, and seeing that the members of the Church of England in Natal will be perfectly satisfied with such an appointment, the Crown will nominate Sir G. Cox (who has been unanimously indicated by the Church Council of Natal as acceptable), or some other fit person to the vacant see?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I must refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on the 18th ultimo in reply to a somewhat similar question. As I then stated, Her Majesty's Government do not intend to reverse the decision which has been adhered to up to the present, not to take any action in the absence of an application from the Archbishop of Canterbury for a mandate.

THE TREATY WITH CHINA—"ENGLAND" v. "GREAT BRITAIN."

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Why the word "England" is used in the Treaty with China, just issued, instead of "Great Britain?"

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) also asked, Whether in the Convention between Her Majesty and His Majesty the Emperor of China, relative to Burmah and Thibet, of 24th July, 1886, in Articles 1, 2, 3, and 4, the name of "England" alone is mentioned as one of the contracting parties; whether the separate use of the name "England" in diplomatic documents intended to bind the United Kingdom meets his approval; and, whether such usage is consistent with the terms of the Act of Union between England and Scotland?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The Correspondence relative to the Treaty with China to which my attention has been called by the hon. Members was carried on by telegraph. The Preamble of the Treaty states it is between Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and His Majesty the Emperor of China. In Articles 1, 2, and 4 England appears as the agreeing party. The term "Great Britain" or "the United Kingdom" would, no doubt, have been the correct term to use; and had there been time to refer the text of the draft Convention home before the signature the text would have been amended accordingly. Time was an object, however; and as the text was approved by the Emperor of China the Convention was laid as signed.

DR. CLARK asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the use of the word "England" in such a connection was a direct breach of Article 1 of the Act of Union between Scotland and England?

MR. W. H. SMITH said, it was only a telegraphic error, or rather the inadvertent adoption of the one word used for brevity in telegraphing; but, as the Treaty had been ratified, the error could not be corrected. Undoubtedly there had been no intention whatever either to violate the Union or to do any violence to the just susceptibilities of the hon. Gentleman opposite.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid.): When the right hon. Gentleman says that either "Great Britain" or "the United Kingdom" would be the proper term to use, does he recognize no difference between the terms?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The short term was used, and the diplomatists ought to have amended it. There was no intention whatever to depart from the usual language.

DR. CLARK: Will the Treaty be amended, or do the Government take upon themselves the responsibility of signing a Treaty which is contrary to Act of Parliament, and persisting in so doing after their attention has been called to it?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The Treaty is signed and ratified, and therefore it cannot be altered. The error, which I regret, cannot be corrected unless we go through the process of renouncing a Treaty which is desired by all parties.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): May I ask, is it a fact that the Treaty was drafted by an Irishman — Mr. O'Connor?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I believe so, Sir.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT—PROSECUTION OF MR. JOHN HAYDEN.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, a Question of which I have given him private Notice, Whether Mr. John Hayden, Town Commissioner, editor of *The Westmeath Examiner*, Mullingar, and brother of the hon. Member for South Leitrim, has been served with a summons under the Crimes Act; what is the nature of the charge against Mr. Hayden; when and where the offence was committed; and by whose direction the prosecution was instituted?

The CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. Balfour) (Manchester, E.): I have not had time to obtain the information the hon. Gentleman asks for, as I only got notice of the Question a few moments ago.

Mr. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): May I ask——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, Order!

Subsequently,

Mr. TUITE said, I wish to ask the Chief Secretary, whether he will give me the information I have just asked for before the House adjourns this evening—if he will be able to state whether the prosecution of Mr. Hayden is due to the fact that both himself and his brother are political opponents of the Government?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I can answer the last part of the Question at once. That is certainly not the ground for the prosecution, if prosecution there be. I have, however, no information on the subject; but I will at once send and inquire what the facts are, and, if I can, I will tell the hon. Gentleman to-night; if not, perhaps he will kindly put his Question down for to-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked, when the Government intended to proceed with the Allotments Bill?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I hope to be able to do so on Monday, after Committee of Supply.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley) asked, whether the Bill would be taken at any hour at which it might be reached on Monday?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Well, I think it must be taken on Monday under any circumstances; and I hope the House will make such progress in Supply as will enable us to proceed with it at a reasonable hour.

Mr. BURT (Morpeth): Is it the intention of the Government to take the Coal Mines, &c. Regulation Bill to-morrow?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Yes, it is.

Mr. MASON (Lanark, Mid) asked, whether the Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill would be taken to-night?

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he was afraid there was little chance of the Bill being taken to-night.

BULGARIA.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question of which he had given private Notice, Whether it was the case, as had been stated, that the Porte had accepted a Russian proposal to send General Ernroth on a special Mission to Bulgaria; and whether such a Mission would not be a violation of the Treaty of Berlin?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): I have not received any Notice of the hon. Member's Question; but, in any case, I should have asked him to put it on the Paper.

Dr. TANNER gave Notice that he would repeat the Question on Saturday.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES—OPPOSITION AT OSTEND.

Mr. ADDISON (Ashton-under-Lyne) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he could give the House any further information relative to the outrages on British fishermen at Ostend?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I am glad to be able to state, in answer to the Question of my hon. and learned Friend, that the Board of Trade have received very satisfactory information from Ostend. The Foreign Office have communicated to the Board of Trade to-day the substance of a despatch from Her Majesty's Minister at Brussels received to-day, stating that he believes that British fishermen may now land their fish at Ostend unmolested; and a further despatch has been received from Consul General Grattan from Ostend to the following effect:—

> "Ramsgate boat arrived this morning; fish landed and sold; all quiet."

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—IRISH BUSINESS.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.) asked, If it was intended to take the Supplemental Estimates, or go on with them in their order, and also did the First Lord of the Treasury intend to make any statement with regard to the course of Business?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, it was intended to take the Estimates in the order in which they stood. With regard to the measures in which the hon. and learned Member was interested, he might say it was not the intention of the Government to persevere with the Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill and several other Irish Bill, and they were not on the Paper to-night.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I would ask the right hon. Gentleman why it is that he has determined not to proceed with the Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Simply on the ground that it is so opposed by the hon. Gentleman's Friends as to render it exceedingly improbable that we would be able to pass it at this late period of the Session. If it is read a second time it must be referred to a Select Committee; and the hon. Gentleman can easily understand that, under these circumstances, it is impossible to go on with the Bill at this period of the Session.

MR. SEXTON: Has the right hon. Gentleman taken the trouble to ascertain how many of the Representatives of Ireland are opposed to this Bill, and particularly how many of the Irish Members connected with the Province of Ulster are opposed to it?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have taken the trouble to satisfy myself that it will be met with violent opposition, which, I think, we ought not to ask the House to encounter at this period of the Session. I would point out, however, that it is open to the Government to introduce the Bill early next Session.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.) asked, whether the Distressed Unions (Ireland) Bill was one of the Bills the Government intended to drop?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I have not much to add to what I have already said as to this Bill and the Municipal Regulation (Constabulary, &c.) (Belfast) Bill. I have no intention, because I believe it is impossible, to force these Bills through against the determined opposition of any section of the House. I have no grounds for believing that the opposition which has been announced has in any way relaxed and therefore practically the hon. Member must regard the Bill as dead.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

—o—

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £38,508, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, of Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland, including certain Allowances under the Act 15 and 16 Vic. c. 83."

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): There are several matters connected with this Vote which I wish to bring under the notice of the Committee. In the first place, I find that a recommendation from the Treasury has been entirely ignored both by the Irish Office and by the Treasury themselves. The recommendation to which I refer was made considerably over 12 months ago. It was made when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) was Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, but it was followed up by another, while the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was Chief Secretary. It certainly seems to be somewhat strange that although a year and a-half have elapsed since the recommendation was made, the same sum appears in the Estimates for the salary of the Attorney General for Ireland, as if the recommendation of the Treasury had never been made. It would not perhaps have been so strange if the recommendation had been made by the Treasury, and the Irish Office had not acted upon it; but it was in the power of the Treasury itself to determine what sum should be paid. I think the Committee are entitled to look closely into the matter. So long as March, 1886, a correspondence passed between the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne and the right hon. Gentleman the then Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) in regard to the salary of the Attorney General for Ireland, and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury was strongly of opinion that it ought to be reduced from £5,000 to £4,000 for non-contentious business, while for contentious business a liberal scale of fees should be allowed. Soon after this correspondence was entered into a change of Government took place. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne went out of Office, and he was succeeded as Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, and I find that a correspondence passed 12 months ago—in August, 1886—between the right hon. Gentleman and the Treasury upon this very question. The Treasury still adhered to their recommendation that the salary should be fixed at £4,000, and an understanding seems to have been arrived at, as a kind of compromise, that so long as the right hon. and learned Gentleman who is now Mr. Justice Holmes occupied the position, the salary should remain unaltered, and therefore it was allowed to stand at £5,000. But the Estimates we are now considering are for the financial year ending the 31st of March next, and a change in the Office of Attorney General has very recently taken place. For my own part, I think there ought to be a Select Committee appointed to examine these Estimates, especially in regard to Ireland. In this instance alone it is palpable that as flagrant a piece of jobbery has been perpetrated as it is possible to imagine. What are the facts of the case? Mr. Justice Holmes was made a Judge when three months of the financial year had elapsed, and the reduction recommended by the Treasury ought to have been made; but the Committee are now asked to vote a sum of £750 over and above what the present occupant of the Office is entitled to and above what the Secretary to the Treasury recommended a year and a-half ago. But the jobbery does not end here. I can understand the *entente cordiale* which now exists between the Office of the Attorney General and the Treasury and other Offices connected with the Irish Executive. Of course, all notions of cheese-paring economy are carefully kept out of view, but I think the Committee are entitled to look at the matter in a very different light. They have a right to consider the recommendation which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury made to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary as far back as a year and a-half ago, and which related to the very item which is here presented in this Estimate. I have here a copy of the correspondence between the Treasury and the Irish Office as to the remuneration of the Attorney and Solicitor General for Ireland, and I think the best course I can take is to read it to the Committee in order to explain the matter to which it refers. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, writing to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland on the 10th of April, 1886, says—

"Their Lordships have very carefully considered the facts and statistics on which the proposals of the Irish Government are founded, and they are prepared to assent to the following arrangements:—From the 1st instant, the salaries and allowances now paid to the Law Officers shall cease, and in their stead shall be paid the following salaries to be annually voted by Parliament. (1.) To the present Attorney General £5,000 a-year, to be reduced in the case of all future holders of the Office to £4,000 a-year. (2.) To the Solicitor General, £2,000 a-year. These salaries shall cover all business of whatever kind done for any Department of Government, except such business as is specially described below as contentious business. They cannot consent, however, to the present scale of salary being altered in the case of future holders of the Office, as they are decidedly of opinion that it is sufficient to command the services of an officer in all respects competent to discharge the duties of the Office."

Appended to the letter is an ample list of the fees prescribed for any contentious business which may devolve upon the Attorney General; and the reason why the Treasury recommend the reduction of the salary is fully and clearly stated—namely, because—

> "They are decidedly of opinion that it is sufficient to command the services of an officer in all respects competent to discharge the duties of the Office."

The then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland—Lord Aberdeen—demurred to the recommendation of the Treasury, as will be seen from the letter of the Under Secretary for Ireland to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury dated—

> "Dublin Castle, May 3, 1886.
>
> "His Excellency directs me to state that there is one point only in their Lordships' letter of the 10th instant, which he finds himself unable to accept, and that is the proposed reduction of the salary of £5,000 a-year sanctioned for the present Attorney General to £4,000 in the case of all future appointments."

But the Treasury adhered to their recommendation, and on the 12th of May, 1886, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury wrote the following letter to the Under Secretary for Ireland:—

> "I am to request you to inform His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant that after carefully considering the argument put forward by the Irish Government, my Lords see no reason for departing from the view expressed in their letter of the 10th ultimo, that the salary of any future Attorney General should be £4,000 per annum, and they trust that His Excellency will be able to concur with them in this matter."

In a subsequent letter they say—

> "When to these considerations is added the right enjoyed by the Attorney General to promotion to the Judicial Bench if any vacancy should occur during his tenure of Office, my Lords feel very strongly that a salary of £4,000 a-year, with the other conditions of the appointment, is amply sufficient to command the services of the most eminent leaders of the Bar in Ireland."

Nevertheless, there has been a change in the Office of Attorney General, and the main portion of the recommendation of the Treasury that the salary should be reduced from £5,000 to £4,000 has not been acted upon. As yet we have received no information as to the reason which has induced the Treasury to give way on so important a point, and why this recommendation, made a year and a half ago, has not been carried out. I should be the last person to underrate the eminent ability of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) who is the present holder of the Office. He is, no doubt, an eminent lawyer and a gentleman in the fullest degree competent to advise the Irish Executive, and to defend in this House the action of the Government. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the salary of £5,000 which is paid for the services of the right hon. and learned Gentleman is a very large one, and that it has been condemned by the Treasury as exorbitant. It must also be borne in mind that the right hon. and learned Attorney General has the advantage of receiving large and liberal fees for the contentious business he is called upon to conduct. No doubt, it is true that the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland has very little opportunity of carrying on a private practice seeing that it is essential for him to be absent from Ireland while he is discharging his Parliamentary duties. At the same time, I agree with the Treasury that a salary of £4,000 a-year together with the other sources of remuneration which are open to him, and the fees which he receives for conducting contentious business, are ample for any services he is called upon to perform. I confess that I have been surprised to find this item of £5,000 presented in the present Estimate in connection with the Office of Attorney General after the recommendation of the Treasury. Of course, we must not look too closely into the relations which exist between the Irish Officers and the present Treasury Bench; but I maintain that it is the business of this Committee when we find the Government napping to bring them to their senses. I believe that in the interests of economy what was wise a year and a-half ago is none the less wise now. It is to be regretted that the Estimates have been brought on for discussion at so late a period of the year, when a large number of Members are absent, and when it is impossible to give the matter that close attention which it would otherwise have received. Personally, I very much regret the circumstance, because I believe that if the Vote could have been brought under the notice of the Committee at an earlier period, they would have viewed with great jealousy the setting aside of a recommendation made by the Treasury themselves for the sole purpose of securing economy and efficiency in the administration of the country. I regret to find that the Government do not feel themselves in a position to carry out a recommendation to which they are themselves parties, and I am afraid that their reason for not doing so is obvious. I think I am fairly entitled to ask why the recommendation of the Treasury for the reduction of the salary has not been carried out, and why the Committee should now be asked to vote a sum of £5,000, when the Treasury has said that £4,000 a-year is adequate?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Gentleman asks why the Government have not carried out the recommendation of the Treasury to reduce the salary of the Attorney General for Ireland from £5,000 to £4,000 whenever a vacancy arose. The reason why the Government have not carried out the recommendation is because they yielded to the very strong representations made on the subject by myself, as representing the Irish Government; and in giving that advice I was only following the precedent set by my Predecessors in Office, who, irrespective of Party, have always taken the view which I myself take very strongly. The hon. Gentleman has called the attention of the Committee to the recommendation of the Treasury; but I do not know whether he gave the Committee to understand—I rather gather that he did not—how great a reduction has taken place in the fees received by the Attorney General. Looking at a table of the emoluments of the Office which has been drawn up, I observe that from 1877 to 1885 in no case did the amount received by the Attorney General for Ireland sink below £6,000 a-year. There were two cases in which it was above £9,000, and two in which it was above £7,000, the average of the salary during those years being considerably above £7,000 per annum. In the future it may be taken that the salary—fees for contentious business included—will never reach, not £9,000 or £7,000, but not even £6,000. An enormous reduction, therefore, has already been made in the salaries of the Irish Law Officers of the Crown, and the question now before the Committee is whether that reduction should be carried further. In my opinion, it ought not to be carried further in view of the fact that an Irish Law Officer has to give up all his private practice when he accepts Office, and finds it altogether lost when he leaves Office. The Committee must remember that the work of the Irish Attorney General is one which is of so prodigious a character that it occupies his whole time; he has no time for private practice, but his entire time is taken up in the onerous duty of advising and supporting the Government. Compare the business of the Irish and English Law Officers. I have had some opportunity of making myself acquainted both with the duties of the Irish and of the Scotch Law Officers, and I would point out, in the case both of the Irish and the Scotch Law Officers of the Crown, that Dublin and Edinburgh are separated by long distances from London, where the greater part of the duties of the Office must necessarily be carried on. Therefore, when a gentleman accepts the position of Irish or Scotch Law Officer, he at once finds himself deprived of the greater part of his private practice, while an English Law Officer is left in the full enjoyment of his. I think the Committee will agree with me that this ought to be marked by a corresponding difference in the amount of salary, and I am quite satisfied that the amount of salary received by the Attorney General is not equal to the earnings of a successful lawyer from private practice. In addition to this, we must bear in mind the fact that he has to give up the whole of his private practice.

An hon. MEMBER: Not all.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, practically all. There may be cases in which a man who has been in command of a large private practice may be able to resume it when he goes back to Dublin; but such cases are, I believe, very rare. Those in which private practice is shut out beyond recovery, are, however, most frequent. Then, again, the work which the Attorney General for Ireland has to do is of the most arduous nature, and I think it would be contrary to our instincts of common justice to send him back, upon a change of Office, to his profession, with the hopeless prospect of attempting to regain his private practice. I believe I am accurately stating the view of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley), who was my Predecessor in the Office of Chief Secretary, when I say that he entirely shares my view that the salary should be maintained.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): I have no opinion to express in regard to the capacity either of the Attorney General for England, of the Lord Advocate, or of the Attorney General for Ireland; but I want to know why the order of the Treasury to reduce the salary of the Irish Attorney General to £4,000 on the next vacancy has not been carried out? Is the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) responsible for the non-observance of the recommendation made by his own Department? Did it rest with the Auditor General?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I can satisfy the hon. and gallant Gentleman upon that subject. It did not rest with the Auditor General. If he will read the last letter which appears in the Correspondence, he will find that it is as follows:—

> "I have laid before the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury your letter of the 30th ultimo, referring to the correspondence which passed last year as to the future salary and emoluments of the Irish Law Officers, and conveying the recommendation of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant that the salary of the Attorney General should now be fixed at £5,000 instead of £4,000, the rate then sanctioned by this Board. In reply, I am to state that Her Majesty's Advisers, in view of the very strong opinion again urged by His Excellency, assent to the appointment, in the room of Mr. Holmes, who has become a Judge of the High Court, being made at the salary of £5,000 a-year, together with fees on the usual professional scale for contentious business. Their Lordships of the Treasury will accordingly be prepared to give instructions for the payment of the salary at the above rate to the officer now to be appointed."

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: I do not recollect the Correspondence now quoted having been laid before the House. In the letter just read by the right hon. Gentleman Mr. Holmes is mentioned as having vacated the Office, and I want to know whether the letter refers solely to the last holder?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No; to the present holder.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I should like to know what is meant by the term "the present Attorney General?" At the time the Estimates were presented "the present Attorney General" was Mr. Hugh Holmes, and not the right hon. and learned Gentleman who now holds the Office. When an Irish barrister is appointed Attorney General, he probably gives up a private practice worth, perhaps, £3,000 a-year for a position worth at least £6,000 or £8,000 a-year. That is the position of every Gentleman who has held the Office—namely, that he gives up his private practice, and takes a position which gives him two or three times what he was ever able to obtain as a private practitioner. The right hon. Gentleman says that a high salary is necessary to compensate the Attorney General when he finds it necessary to go back to the Bar and endeavour to piece up his broken private practice. But that is not really the case. The rule in nine cases out of 10 is that the Irish Attorney General does not go back to a broken-up private practice, but he jumps at once to the Bench. The only instance to the contrary which has occurred for some time is, I believe, that of Mr. Samuel Walker, who was Attorney General to the late Government. But whenever a Liberal Government returns to power Mr. Samuel Walker will be Attorney General again. I have read very carefully the Correspondence which has passed between the Treasury and the Irish Office on this question, and I find it expressly stipulated that although the salary of Mr. Holmes was not to be interfered with whenever a vacancy occurred the salary should be reduced from £5,000 to £4,000. Mr. Holmes became Solicitor General for Ireland in 1885, and by good fortune succeeded rapidly to the position of Attorney General, thereby becoming perfectly safe for a seat on the Irish Bench. He was, therefore, not in the position of having the contingency before him of having to go back to Ireland to restore a broken-up practice. The point in regard to salary appears to have been strained in regard to Mr. Holmes, who, having been Solicitor General, may appear to have had some claim to consideration.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The salary is not personal to the holder of the Office.

Mr. M. J. KENNY: At any rate, according to the recommendation of the Treasury the higher salary was to cease with Mr. Holmes. I am afraid that all the good resolutions which have been made for the reduction of expenditure when Offices fall vacant have resulted in a very small amount of economy. There is a decrease in the present Vote of something like £530; but I wish to point out that the amount of the Vote does not appear to have been affected by the apparent reduction in the nominal salary of the Irish Attorney General, the amount of that reduction having possibly been made up under the head of Miscellaneous Charges, which appear to have increased during the year by a sum of £5,000. I notice also that during the present year certain fees under the head of Law Expenses, which were promised to be reduced, still remain at the same figure. The fact is that when once the expenditure for legal matters reaches a certain level it is extremely difficult to drag it below that level. I know how difficult it is to effect economy except by those who are responsible for the preparation of the Estimate; but I know also the great ease by which they can cut down these charges, and that was the reason which induced me to rise for the purpose of calling attention to the Estimate. Let me go a step further. The Irish Legal Advisers of the Government never represent the feeling of the Irish people. The right hon. and learned Gentleman who a few months ago was Solicitor General for Ireland, and who is now Attorney General, would not have been a Member of this House but for the fact that he was returned for the Walton Division of Liverpool. A gentleman occupying that distinguished position knows that he must gird himself up for a fight against the liberties of the Irish nation, and he knows also that no Irish popular constituency would return him as their Representative. He gives up no private practice except for his own advantage, and he would never leave Dublin except to come over here as one of the Law Advisers of the Crown. I believe that in the long run these gentlemen find that they are able to make a good deal more money by sacrificing their private practice.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I think I never read a more charming Correspondence, and I only rise for the purpose of pointing out that while the Liberal Governments have invariably to put up with snubs from the Treasury, as soon as a Tory Government comes into Office they have no difficulty in extracting whatever money they desire. This charming incident is chiefly remarkable for its political significance. It is to this Correspondence that we owe the transportation of Sir Robert Hamilton to Van Diemen's Land. It is a popular error to suppose that Sir Robert Hamilton was banished because he was a Home Ruler.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Member knows that this has no relation to the Vote.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I will not refer to it further. I will only note the fact that the moment every Irish Secretary has come into the field he has had to give way. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) succumbed early in the fight. Then a new Ruler came in—the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) — and, although months had elapsed, the very day following his arrival in Dublin Castle—on the 6th of August—he took up the Correspondence just as if nothing had happened. Nothing can be more instructive than the way in which the right hon. Member for West Bristol commenced this Correspondence. The right hon. Gentleman only reached the Castle on the night of the 5th of August, and on the 6th he got up at 6 in the morning to open this correspondence. He writes:—

> "I have to inform the Secretary to Her Majesty's Treasury that I have had before me the question of the remuneration of the Irish Law Officers of the Crown."

Although Belfast was in a state of riot and turmoil, the first thing the right hon. Gentleman had before him was the important question of the salary of the Attorney General. I must congratulate the Attorney Generals for Ireland on the admirable way in which they are looked after, and I trust it will continue. I hope the Government will devote similar attention to matters of equal importance, especially the serious inconvenience and loss involved in the present arrangements for the Winter Assizes, under which witnesses have in many cases to go great distances, and have no means of knowing when the cases in which they are required to give evidence are likely to come on. I have heard of cases where witnesses have had to go into the workhouse to eat their Christmas dinners while awaiting the trial of a prisoner. The present system may be convenient to the Court, and convenient to the Bar; but the first study should be the convenience of the poor. No doubt, it is convenient to group all Leinster cases and try them in Dublin; but it is not fair to the prisoners. There is one other matter to which I wish to invite the attention of the Government. I see in the Estimate an item of £300 for the expenses of juries at Assizes. I blame the Government for having allowed the Bill of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for York (Mr. Lockwood) to be thrown out in the House of Lords. It would have obviated the necessity for juries being locked up in cases of felony, and I would earnestly impress upon the Government the necessity of allowing some such measure as that to be passed, and of giving the Judge the right of allowing a jury to go home in the event of a trial not being concluded without locking them up. The Bill of my hon. and learned Friend passed this House unanimously, but it was thrown out in the House of Lords, because they would not entrust the Judge with a discretionary power to decide in what cases juries ought to be locked up. I maintain that in charges of felony of a trumpery character it would be right and proper to allow persons serving on a jury to return to their homes. The result of the rejection of the Bill of my hon. and learned Friend is that we are now called on to pay this sum of £300. I trust the Committee will take a financial and economical view of the matter, and will bring some pressure to bear upon the Government with the view of passing the Bill which the House of Lords have rejected. I should like to know whether any portion of this sum was spent in improperly supplying jurors with refreshments? I have heard of a case in the County Court in which, in the trial of prisoners under the Crimes Act, a good convicting jury were supplied with champagne; and I should therefore like to know whether this sum of £300 includes any sum for refreshments? If such a practice exists, I think it ought to be abandoned. I do not think it right that money should be spent by the Crown officials in this way. No doubt it is necessary that juries who are locked up should have refreshment; but I trust that the Treasury will very sharply scrutinize anything which touches the supply of drink to juries in Ireland. The practice of dosing Irish juries with champagne and strong drink is one which should altogether be avoided.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): The Treasury have a scale of allowances, which is about 1*s.* 6*d.* or 2*s.* 6*d.*, and would certainly not be sufficient to provide champagne. If a juror requires more than the ordinary allowance, he must pay for it out of his own pocket. All I can say is that the contribution of the Treasury is a very moderate one. With regard to what the hon. and learned Member has said as to the hon. and learned Member for York's Bill being a Private Bill, it was not a matter with which I could deal. I can assure the hon. and learned Gentleman that his suggestion concerning the Winter Assizes shall receive the careful consideration of the Government.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): There is one question I should like to put to the right hon. and learned Gentleman in reference to the discharge of prisoners from Armagh Gaol. I want to know whether the prisoners on their discharge receive any portion of their travelling expenses for their return home?

THE CHAIRMAN: There is nothing in this Vote in connection with the conveyance of prisoners. The question had better be reserved for the Prisons' Vote.

MR. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to a matter of very considerable importance. More than once a question has been asked of the Irish Law Officers in reference to the failure to prosecute Sub-Inspector Sullivan and Head Constable Ward for a murder of which they were declared to be guilty by a Coroner's jury in the county of Cork in the early part of the year. The Coroner's inquiry lasted for several days, and in the end returned a verdict of wilful murder against the District Inspector and the head-constable. The Coroner made out an order for the arrest of these men and their committal for trial; but they were allowed to retire for a few weeks on leave without being arrested or tried, and ultimately they were reinstated in the positions they formerly occupied. I want to know why the farce of empannelling a Coroner's jury should be gone into, and considerable expense entailed, if no regard whatever is to be paid to the finding of the jury, and there is to be a refusal to execute the warrant made out by the Coroner? I am told that the Government are anxious to mete out equal justice to Her Majesty's subjects both in England and Ireland. Let me ask them, then, what would have been the course pursued if a Coroner's jury in England had found a verdict of wilful murder against particular individuals? The warrant of the Coroner would have been put in execution at once. A very different state of things seems to prevail in Ireland, and the Law Officers of the Crown seem to do anything they like. I have to complain, first of all, against the conduct of the police at Youghal; but a more serious charge rests against the Government in not having presented these men, upon the verdict of the Coroner's jury, for trial at the Cork Summer Assizes. A charge of wilful murder is a very serious charge; and it must be borne in mind that if there were any elements of doubt in the case the matter would have to be fully sifted by a Grand Jury before the prisoners were sent for trial. If there was any loophole for escape, it is quite certain that a Grand Jury of the County of Cork, or of any other county in Ireland, would refuse to find a true bill. But in this case, although there was the verdict of a Coroner's jury, and strong *primâ facie* evidence, the Government themselves refused to send the accused for trial, or to present a bill. Surely, while these things are allowed to occur, the Government cannot expect the people of Ireland to have any respect for the administration of the law. It is impossible for me at this moment to enter into all the circumstances of the case; and therefore I will confine myself, first of all, to asking the right hon. and learned Gentleman why it is that Sub-Inspector Sullivan and Head Constable Ward were not sent for trial on the Coroner's inquisition, and if, in future, regard will be paid to the finding of a Coroner's jury, with the view of preventing a similar act of injustice from being done?

MR. GIBSON: I may explain that the reason why, in the case referred to by the hon. Member, the warrant was not executed, was that it was informal. I will ask the hon. Member to bear with me for a few moments while I explain the circumstances. In all my acquaintance with the administration of the Criminal Law, I cannot recall any instance in which a man has been put upon his trial for murder upon a mere Coroner's inquisition, when the matter has not gone in the ordinary course before the Justices, and, after the examination of witnesses in the presence of the accused, been sent by them for trial. In this case there was no inquiry before the Justices, and no opportunity was afforded to the accused for cross-examining the witnesses. No person ought to be tried for his life without these preliminary safeguards. In the course of the ordinary administration of the Criminal Law the person charged is brought before the committing magistrates, witnesses are examined and may be cross-examined, so that the prisoner may know the worst of the case that can be brought against him; the prisoner is not bound to make any statement, but if he does so he is warned that it may be used against him; and after he is committed for trial the case has to go before the Grand Jury, with whom it rests to say whether or not they find a true bill against the prisoner. I do not think a man ought to be put on his trial for his life without these preliminary safeguards and formalities. The action of the Crown in regard to the case of the man who was killed at Youghal during a time of commotion is not isolated, because in certain other cases the direction has been given that the prosecution should not proceed on the Coroner's inquisition, on the ground that the matter ought to be dealt with in the ordinary way, and that the prisoner ought to have an opportunity of fighting his case out properly, and ought not to be put in jeopardy of his life merely on the finding of a Coroner's jury.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): In what case was that laid down?

MR. GIBSON: A woman was killed and the Coroner's jury found a verdict of wilful murder, but the inquisition was proved to be wrong in point of form, and the accused could not be put on his trial. I only mention this matter as a small matter in connection with the present case, but as showing what has been the ruling in other instances. It has never been considered right to put a man on his trial for his life merely upon a Coroner's inquisition, where the accused has not had a full opportunity of sifting the evidence by cross-examination. At the time this man was killed the town of Youghal was in a state of great excitement owing to the arrest of Father Fahy; there were riots in the town; windows were broken, and it was known that the police had been sent for. They arrived on the following day. The shop windows were shut at an early hour in the morning; but the disturbance was great, and unfortunately this man was killed.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON was proceeding to enter into the details of the case when——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is out of Order.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The case at Youghal amounted, at least, to one of manslaughter, and it would have been only fair and right that an inquiry should have taken place into the conduct of the police. The finding of the Coroner's Court ought to have had some weight, at least, attached to it. In England the Crown does not persist in refusing to satisfy public feeling in regard to the conduct of the police, as the proceedings in the case of Miss Cass testify. The policeman may not have been at fault; but the charge is one of breach of duty, and the Crown are taking proceedings against the policeman. In the case of a lady who was alleged to have been poisoned at Cork, the Coroner's inquest established that a crime had been committed, and the Crown then proceeded to take steps to find out the guilty party; but in the Youghal case the Government did not even take the trouble of having the inquisition quashed by the Court of Queen's Bench. In the case of Police Constable Endacott, if instead of assaulting Miss Cass and improperly arresting her the constable had murdered her, in the event of the Coroner's jury finding him guilty of murder, I should like to know what Home Secretary who allowed Endacott to remain on leave of absence for a fortnight and then restored him to his position, without giving Miss Cass's relatives the slightest redress, would have been allowed to remain in Office? When a respectable girl in England is arrested for half-an-hour the whole of the country is wrung with her wrongs; but in Ireland if a constable does not simply arrest you, but sends you to eternity, no notice is taken. That is the difference between the people and their relations with the Government in the two countries. I maintain that in the Youghal case justice ought to have been done, and the Government have set a very bad precedent for future Administrations by not satisfying popular feeling in directing an inquiry to be made. If upon a fair trial the Judge was satisfied that these men were not guilty, he would have directed an acquittal, and all the indignity the accused would have been subjected to would have been the indignity of standing in the dock to answer the charge made against him, which is not much of an indignity after all, and is only what I have been subjected to myself. I say that these men ought to have been tried. They killed a man; it may not have amounted to the crime of murder, but certainly they were guilty of manslaughter, and the course taken by the Irish Executive affords a most unfavourable contrast to the course taken in this country in the Regent Street case. It is a monstrous thing that policemen in Ireland should be allowed to kill people and run their bayonets through them without the smallest notice being taken by Her Majesty's Government.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I think it is a disgraceful blot in the system of the administration of justice in Ireland that policemen, no matter what they do, should be allowed to get off scot free. In this case a man's life was lost. It may not have amounted to murder; there may have been extenuating circumstances, owing to the excitement which prevailed; but it was the duty of the Government to make a full inquiry. I think there has been such a doubt that it would have been much better if the Crown had not shown its partizanship. What the Crown do in Ireland is that they pick the jurors in cases where they want a conviction. If anyone who is accused is suspected of Nationalist feeling, no matter what the class of offence charged against him, he is made to feel the full weight of the influence of the Crown in the prosecution. And if it be a political offence of which he is accused the Crown resort to every device in order to secure his conviction. They pack the jury and they exercise every right they have, both in regard to the selection of the place of trial and in regard to the selection of those who are to be on the jury. But if the person accused be on the other side in politics they take no pains to keep out of the jury those who are interested on his behalf in the trial. Take, for instance, the case of the Emergency man who killed a young farmer near Castleisland in the county of Kerry. I may say that in the opinion of those who could form an opinion on this matter—and my own opinion was the same—when this Emergency man saw a young man coming along by the fence with a pipe in his mouth he instantly—under the influence of a mere scare—fired at him and shot him. There can be no doubt from the character that the man who was shot bore in the district, testified to, as it was, by the district magistrate, the police magistrate, and the clergy of all denominations in the district, that he was not in the least likely to have come out to make an attack on the Emergency man in the middle of the day, on a public road and within 150 yards of a police barracks. But, be that as it may, the poor man lost his life. He was found dead on the road, and the people saw the Emergency man going towards the police barracks. The Coroner's jury brought in, in that case, a verdict which, perhaps, I might think a strong one—one of "Wilful murder." But the jury did not wish to commit themselves to a verdict that the shooting of this man was wilful murder. The verdict they returned, in the first instance, was that the man came by his death by a gun-shot wound inflicted by the Emergency man. The Coroner, in the first instance, declined to receive this verdict. He wanted them either to bring in a verdict which did not attribute the infliction of the wound to anyone, or to bring in a verdict of wilful murder. The jury then again retired, and ultimately they brought in a verdict of wilful murder. Now, the Crown afterwards relied on this act of the Coroner; and it appeared to me that his action in this transaction was with a view to subsequent events. However, be that as it may, the Crown—as I have said—subsequently relied on the action of the Coroner, to show that it was impossible to get a fair trial in Ireland. In support of that contention they adduced this verdict of "wilful murder," arrived at in the way I have described. Well, when the Emergency man was tried the Crown took no pains with the case. If it had been the case of a Land Leaguer charged with causing the death of an Emergency man, every sympathizer with the Land League would have been excluded from the jury-box; but there was nothing of the kind done when this Emergency man was accused of killing an unoffending passer-by. The accused man was acquitted, and I do not say that the acquittal was wrong; but there were such strong elements of doubt in the case that had it happened in the ordinary way the result would have been a disagreement which might, no doubt, have resulted in an acquittal. But it is inevitable that great irritation should arise, when it is seen that this Emergency man, who shot an unarmed man on the high road, escaped so easily, while many men in that same district are suffering unjust imprisonment at the instigation of the Crown. Then there was the case of another Emergency man who caused the death of one of his assistants. This man also got off, because the Crown made no effort to exclude from the jury men belonging to the society whose *employé* this man was. I do not want to bring a charge against the magistrates, or the members of the association to which this man belonged, that they would violate their oaths in the jury-box. But I complain that the Crown did not take the same course against them that they would have taken against us. If I had presented myself as a juror in an ordinary assault case in Kerry, before I had got within 40 yards of the jury-box the representative of the Crown would have called on me to stand by. [An Irish MEMBER dissented.] My hon. Friend doubts it. But my hon. Friend knows that the same course would be practised towards him or anyone on this side of the House. We do not ask that the law should be administered in a spirit of recrimination; we do not ask that the course which we condemn, when it is pursued towards ourselves, should be pursued towards others; but we do ask that the Crown should try to teach the people some confidence in the administration of the law by an equal and just administration of the law. There is a great deal in the law that is bad; but there is a great deal that would be tolerable if it were fairly administered; but then it never is so administered in Ireland. The law, such as it is, is never administered fairly in any case in Ireland. As an instance, let me take the action of the Crown in another case in Kerry. A Captain Taylor popped out on the high road one day, when he and his sons were out shooting. The son fired a shot in another direction, but this man thought that someone had fired at him. There was never a shot fired in his neighbourhood but he thought he was in danger of his life; and accordingly he attacked and fired at a poor man on the road. After firing at him and missing him he beat him within an inch of his life. The man applied for a summons, but did not get it from the local magistrates, because Captain Taylor, the father, was in the habit of sitting on the Bench. Surely that was a monstrous piece of injustice. The Crown should have a system, and should pursue it evenly and justly. As it is, the Crown are ready to take up the cases of people who are able to pay their own expenses; and in cases of the kind I have described they should make inquiries through the Crown Solicitor and take up such cases, and prosecute them on behalf of men who, like this poor man, are unable to bear the expense of a prosecution themselves. That would do more for the quietness of the country, would do more to give people confidence in the administration of the law, and would do more to promote what is called law and order than any Proclamation of meetings. I would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland how it can be expected that the people who saw this poor fisherman at Youghal stabbed by a police bayonet can have any confidence in the administration of the law? Will their respect for law and order be increased when they find that the Crown by a trick lets off these police constables who were found guilty by 23 of their fellow-countrymen? This is a base proceeding on the part of the Government, and it is a murderous proceeding too, because it is calculated to instil into the minds of these people a desire for revenge. Putting no confidence in the law or in the administration of the law they will, or at least they may, be led to take some dark way of revenging themselves, because they can get no satisfaction from proceedings under the law and in the light of day. There is not a district in Ireland which cannot produce a case parallel to the Youghal case—some, no doubt, less monstrous I admit. But it is substantially the same all over Ireland. At least, that is my experience since I have paid any attention to the politics of Ireland. This same question has cropped up in some shape or form at every Assizes. Constantly we have the functionaries of the Government committing every sort of crime, ranging from every degree of immorality up to murder, and then we have the efforts of the Crown and of the Castle—in pursuance of a policy that has to be defended by the right hon. Gentleman opposite and those who hold Office—to shield these murderers and criminals. It is a pleasant position for the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues to occupy. But what does it matter to them? We address a few words to them across the House. They listen to us silently, perhaps they pay a sort of deferential attention to the few remarks we make. But it is the same play over and over again. There is no result—there is nothing satisfactory done. Whatever we may say or whatever we may have said in this House, there has never been an instance of a policeman being prosecuted by the Crown in Ireland. In Ireland the maxim is that the servants of the Crown can do no wrong. Whatever wrong done by them we expose, such is the spirit of masonry which exists amongst them from the Lord Lieutenant to the latest recruit in the Constabulary, that they fly to the protection of each other when any one of them is charged with an offence or a crime. The Government is limitless in its resources. It has the law, which it can obtain at no cost, and then behind the law it is armed with force. Very often, as in the case we have been discussing, it disregards all law and takes refuge in force. But the right hon. Gentleman may be assured that so long as we are kept here to discuss these Estimates and do this business—although we might as well be at home—we shall pursue the course of calling attention to these matters. I do not suppose that we should produce much effect, even in what we might describe as a normal Session, when the Estimates are reached earlier and there is a fuller House. Still less can we expect to produce any great effect in the present state of the House. Yet I cannot help thinking that when the points we have been calling attention to go before the people of this country, together with the very imperfect answers given to them from the Treasury, these discussions will prove to be a very useful process in educating the people of this country in a knowledge of the system of government we have in Ireland.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Force, corruption, and base juggling with the law and the Law Courts are the means by which government is carried on in Ireland. We have instances of each time-honoured method in these Estimates. I congratulate the Government on the Estimates coming on at this late period of the Session. Our discussion is now almost of an academical character. We address empty Benches. The House is tired of the protracted Session. The Members of the House are still more tired of it, and we are addressing deaf and unwilling ears. Nevertheless, we have our duty to perform, and we shall perform it. I remember the long and weary years during which the Irish Nationalists were endeavouring to awaken the English people to the right of the Irish people to self-government. I remember how our appeals used to fall on deaf and unwilling ears, and it was not until a great statesman took up the question that the people of England began to listen. It will be the same with these Estimates. I say that corruption and jugglery of the Law Courts are the methods of government in Ireland. I have sometimes a difficulty in understanding how honourable men can ally themselves with such a Government. I say that corruption is one of the methods of government in Ireland. Look at the salaries, bloated almost beyond the conception of corruption entertained in any country in the world, except in Ireland, and perhaps in New York. The right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland has a salary of £4,000 a-year. [An hon. Member: £5,000.] I think it is £4,000. But, whether it is £4,000 or £5,000 a-year, I say it is a gross overcharge. I do not grudge the right hon. and learned Gentleman the money personally. I treat him not personally but officially, and I say that his salaries and those of his Colleagues in Office are gross specimens of corruption. In England, when a Law Officer of the Crown, or a leading member of the Bar, is elevated to the Bench, he sacrifices a considerable amount of income. In Ireland the case is reversed, and every man who leaves the Bar for the Bench does so with an increase instead of a decrease of income. Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General tell me an instance to the contrary? I do not know what the income of the right hon. and learned Gentleman from private practice was before he came over here as Solicitor General; but I know it was a large income which his great abilities entitled him to enjoy. Probably, however, it was not more than £2,500 or £3,000 a-year from the professional element, putting on one side his emoluments as a Law Officer of the Crown; but no man is raised to the Bench who does not get an increase to £4,000 or £5,000. Whenever you have to govern a country against the will of the people you always find this state of circumstances; you keep down popular will by the bayonet, and you give excessive salaries to the Judges, and to the Attorney General and his Colleagues, for the purpose of degrading and corrupting the able men you select for your Officers of the Law. Let me take the case of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General himself. The right hon. and learned Gentleman gets a salary of £5,000 a-year. Had he ever approached an income like that from private practice when at the Bar? I remember a time when Mr. Justice Lawson, during the Fenian trials, might have been seen going about the Four Courts in Dublin, and the jingle of the guineas in his pocket could actually be heard, because he was engaged as the leading counsel in prosecuting honest men who had the interests of Ireland at heart. Whenever you have a political struggle in Ireland —and it is often the child of want and distress—wherever you have misery, suffering, and wretchedness—then is the golden harvest of the creatures who do the bidding of the Government. Besides the salary of £5,000 paid to the Attorney General, the Solicitor General for Ireland receives a salary of £1,700, and the two divide between them a further sum of £2,000 for the trouble and laborious work of drawing up Crown prosecutions, and conducting other contentious business. And these sums do not include the fees paid for non-contentious business. I venture to say that there have been epochs in the history of Ireland during the last 20 years when the Irish Attorney General has pocketed at least £15,000 in the course of a year out of the blood and tears of the Irish nation. I know that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite do not sympathize with my political views; but I ask them to sympathize with my feeling for economy. Why should the taxpayers of this country pay to a Law Officer of the Crown four or five times as much as he would have earned from his private practice at the Bar, simply because he has given it up with the view of qualifying himself for something better? There is no use in talking about considerations of economy as long as you allow this orgie of corruption. The administration of the law in Ireland is a base jugglery. There is not a single man who is suspected of Nationalist principles who is not brought into the Law Courts as into a shamble; while there is not a single man who represents anti-National feeling who is ashamed to steal, waylay, and even kill. What we want to see in Ireland is an Administration in which the scales of justice shall be evenly held. Let me take the Youghal case, which has just been referred to. Does any hon. Member imagine that if in this country a policeman were found by a Coroner's jury guilty of wilful murder he would not be put on his trial? I accept at once the statement of the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland that there was an informality in the warrant; but I think it is a dangerous thing to allow a man accused of so serious a crime to escape all consequences on such a ground. I believe that accused persons in this country have repeatedly been put on their trial simply upon the finding of a Coroner's jury. The verdict of the Coroner's jury affords a *primâ facie* case which would be accepted in any other country in the world than Ireland. The duty of the Government was to have had the case tested by bringing it to the Assizes. But what did they do? They disregarded the verdict of the Coroner's jury, and by sneaking round a bye alley of the Court of Queen's Bench got it quashed. Am I not justified in saying that the administration of the law in Ireland is a base jugglery? Let me take another case. The Crown Prosecutor shows no favour to any Nationalist prisoner brought up for trial; but he takes care that when it is necessary to try an Emergency man he shall be tried by Emergency men only. Of course, the Emergency man goes scot free; in his case it is only a delusion to suppose that killing is murder. But what do the Government think will be the state of Ireland if these things are to go on? The officials of Ireland are poisoning the very source and origin of justice in Ireland. They are the enemies of justice in Ireland, and they are forcing the people of that country into hatred of the law and of its administration. When we see the law so basely and foully administered it is necessary that the Representatives of the Irish people should take every opportunity of bringing before this Committee—although, no doubt, they are not often listened to—and before the country these terrible stories, in order to show at what price and cost of misery and suffering to the people of Ireland justice is being administered.

MR. GIBSON: The hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool has made use of a number of highly-coloured adjectives in denouncing the administration of the law in Ireland. For my part, I do not propose to notice the charge of corruption brought against the Attorney General and the Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland. Speaking for my Predecessors and Colleagues, I may, however, be allowed to say that they are as fair and high-minded a body of men as can be found representing the Crown in this or any other country, and it is a matter of great pain to me to hear language such as has been used with regard to them employed by any Irish Member. Now, with regard to the case brought forward by the hon, Member, I am as good an authority on this subject as most hon. Gentlemen in this House. With regard to the cases brought forward by the hon. Member for West Kerry

(Mr. Edward Harrington), I am not so familiar with them, and I do not know that the hon. Member referred to them in any way as constituting a charge against the Law Officers of the Crown.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: The charge is that the Law Officers allowed the venue to be changed in the case of an Emergency man which would not have been allowed in the case of a Nationalist.

Mr. GIBSON: The venue is changed because a man cannot get a fair trial in the place where the proceedings commenced. The responsibility for the change of venue rests entirely with the Court. I was surprised to hear the charge made against the Cork jury that it was a jury of Emergency men. I should have thought that a Cork jury might have been spared the charge brought against them by the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool. [An hon. Member: You pack the juries there.] Without going into the facts of the Youghal case, I can say that my attitude and that of my Predecessor has been one of strict impartiality, as between the Crown on one side and the prisoner on the other. I have no desire to screen the guilty, nor get a verdict against an innocent man, or against a man whom the evidence does not convict of the offence charged. The hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) said the action of the Crown in the Youghal case was different from that in the Belfast case. But the hon. and learned Gentleman forgets that the late Attorney General for Ireland, when he was satisfied that there was no evidence to sustain the case, directed a *nolle prosequi* to be entered, just as in the case of the Youghal policeman. The other case, however, referred to by the hon. and learned Member for North Longford is one which is now pending, and as I think it would not be proper to refer to that or any other case in that position I shall abstain from doing so, and I hope that other Members of the Committee will follow my example. It is, under the present circumstances, impossible to make reference to it, and I am surprised that the hon. and learned Member has not taken the same view. I do not know that I have anything more to say to the criticisms of hon. Gentlemen opposite on the action of the Officers of the Law in Ireland. In my opinion the administration of the law there is pure. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway I know, from the observations they have made, suspect that there is not perfect rectitude in regard to prosecutions in Ireland. All I can say is that it is a very lamentable thing that such a suspicion should exist, because it is a great misfortune to the interests of the people whose case is discussed in this House. But that suspicion is entirely unfounded. For my own part, I say that I have done my duty, and shall continue to do it. I will never have the charge justly made against me that in discharging my duty I have not been fair and independent.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): There is one thing which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland has noticed, and in which I entirely agree—that is, that there exists in the minds of the people of Ireland the suspicion that the administration of justice is not pure. There is no greater evil in existence than that such a suspicion should prevail. But I put it to the Committee whether such suspicion existing in the minds of a large body of Her Majesty's subjects, and the fact that it has continued to exist for 100 years is not enough to raise doubts as to whether there is not ground for the suspicion. When you find the mass of the people harbouring suspicions of this sort, you have hit upon a state of things which shows that there is something rotten in the system of administration. It was certainly refreshing to hear the right hon. and learned Gentleman defending Irish juries, for we have been accustomed hitherto to hear them attacked; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman rather misconceived the purport of the remarks of the hon. Member for the Scotland Division of Liverpool (Mr. T. P. O'Connor). He referred to the packing of juries. It is a notorious fact that the juries in Ireland are packed; it is a fact that at the last Assize the juries were packed, and that is one of the very abuses that have served to bring your law into utter contempt in Ireland. But it is very curious that the action of the Executive in cases of this kind is just the same as the action always taken in Ireland in reference to the police. No matter whether you find them rightly accused of crime or not, no matter if the case contains elements of suspicion and doubt, no matter if it is clear or otherwise, you find the action of the Government in both cases exactly the same. The Government dare not prosecute the police; they dare not discredit their own agents in Ireland; and that is the reason why every policeman, no matter what his crime may be, is allowed to get off scot free, while every case against an ordinary Irishman is treated as *primâ facie* sufficient for sending him before a packed jury. I will now refer to another matter. It is well known that last winter the Government made the experiment of trying to govern the Irish people by what is called ordinary Law; and I am free to admit that if that experiment were honestly made—that is to say, if what is understood in this country as ordinary law had been tried in Ireland, the result might not have been at all unpleasant to the administrators of the law at Dublin Castle. Although we are very often accused in this House by Liberal Unionists and Tories of having no respect for law and justice, yet I believe it is true that the Irish people love equal and impartial justice, and I believe, also, that if you had endeavoured last winter to govern them by the ordinary law some little degree of respect for the law might have begun to grow up in the minds of the people. But the ordinary law of last winter was a most extraordinary and scandalous fiction of law, I venture to draw attention to it for a short time. I refer particularly to the prosecutions undertaken in the country districts; and these are more important, in my opinion, than prosecutions undertaken as State prosecutions, and conducted in Dublin and other large centres. In country districts you do not and cannot know all that goes on; cases are not reported in the Press, and are, consequently, not sufficiently brought under notice, and in such cases as these you have the Representatives of the Crown and their Colleagues sitting on the Bench "playing such pranks before high Heaven as would make the Angels weep." I would ask the attention of right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench, who are supposed to represent the interests of Ireland, to a case which occurred last September. At that time two men in the county of Limerick were ordered to give bail for good behaviour, or in default to go to gaol, because they had published a placard disrespectfully criticizing the conduct of a land agent. Now, if it had been alleged that this placard was a Boycotting notice, or one which conveyed any threat, some ground would have been made out for the prosecution; a *primâ facie* case would have been made out, and it would have seemed a fair case to be taken up by the Crown. But it was not even alleged that it was a Boycotting notice; it was not even alleged that there was any threat in the placard, which simply animadverted on the agent's conduct in obstructing a tenants' offer of settlement at a Sheriff's sale. If the case had occurred in this country and such a placard had been issued, a proper and Constitutional remedy would have been applied—that is to say, the party aggrieved would have brought his action for libel, which would have been tried in one of the Civil Courts, and if the case were proved damages would have been recovered. But in Ireland the land agent is a sacred person in the eyes of the Judges, and, instead of being left to his ordinary resources, a State prosecution was instituted to deal with the matter. I say that a more scandalous proceeding cannot be imagined. Again, in January this year, at a village in the county of Wicklow, the police actually charged four youths under 14 years of age under a Statute of Edward III. in order to get them sent to gaol. It was found that the prosecutors had not got a copy of the Act; a telegram was sent to Sir Redvers Buller, at Dublin Castle, to forward a copy of the Act, and the answer he sent in reply was that it was out of print, and it was only because a copy of the Statute could not be procured that these four youths who refused to give bail were saved from going to gaol. It seems to me that this is a monstrous case, and, moreover, a silly one, and deserving of reprobation if it cannot be satisfactorily explained. Then I would call the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman to another case. In January last, in consequence of a Resolution said to be passed at County Limerick branch of the National League, three persons were prosecuted before the local magistrates for an alleged offence, the specific charge being one of conspiracy. No evidence was adduced in sustainment of this charge; but in order to procure evidence an order was made for the examination of nearly every member of the branch, the object being to show that Boycotting was the result of the action of the branch; and if satisfactory evidence could have been obtained of conspiracy, the other members of the branch who attended when the Resolution was said to have been passed would have been liable to be put into the dock. The consequence was that every man who was asked whether he was present at the meeting or not was practically asked to criminate himself, and was therefore justified in refusing to answer. I think it would hardly be believed by Englishmen or Scotchmen, and yet it is a fact, that not only were several persons asked by the Crown Solicitors to incriminate themselves, but actually one of them who stood on his legal rights and refused to answer was committed to gaol for eight days and had to spend a week in prison. Now, what answer has the right hon. and learned Gentleman to give to this gross misuse of power by the Crown Solicitor? There is no doubt about the facts, and I will read a few questions put by the Sessional Crown Solicitor who conducted the case. This is a specimen of the cross-examination—

> "Question: Will you swear that there was no resolution proposed to that effect?
>
> "Answer: I decline to answer, and I claim the clemency of the Bench.
>
> "Question: I ask you was there such a resolution proposed?
>
> "Answer: I am not going to incriminate myself.
>
> "Crown Solicitor: But I am not going to incriminate you.
>
> "Witness: You are trying to do so."

Such was the cross-examination, and again and again this man, after being warned that he was asking illegal questions, continued to ask them, in order to frighten this ignorant peasant to give an answer which would have the effect of placing him in the dock and convicting him of the crime of conspiracy. I ask the right hon. and learned Attorney General if he can give any answer to this indictment? Does he approve of the action of the Sessional Solicitor? Or does he approve of the action of the magistrates who sent a man to gaol for refusing to answer a question which he was entitled to refuse to answer, thereby usurping the power which it is supposed can only be exercised by Parliament—namely, the power of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act? These are some of the experiments which the Government have made of governing Ireland according to the ordinary law. Considering these practices, considering the virtual abolition of trial by jury, considering the virtual suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and considering the power taken by the Government to rob and steal during the winter; considering the power they exercise of assaulting innocent citizens and dispersing public meetings, my only wonder is that they should have introduced a Coercion Bill at all, and wasted the time of Parliament in passing it. Last winter they exhausted, under the ordinary process of law, every illegal practice which could possibly be brought into operation, and they exercised in advance all the powers of the Coercion Act, which has since been passed into law. [*Laughter.*] Some hon. Gentlemen opposite appear to think that this is a laughing matter; but I can tell them it is no laughing matter in Ireland, and I tell them, further, that the more the people of Ireland think over this the less of a laughing matter will it be for them also. I think, therefore, that hon. Gentlemen opposite might find some better means than laughter of expressing their opinions. These are specific cases—the names of the persons, their places of abode, and the dates are all given; and I invite the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland to the fact, so that he may be in a position to say whether he has any answer to give to my statement. I tell the right hon. and learned Gentleman that if he has no answer to give, it is no wonder that the word "law" in Ireland is only another name for injustice, and that your "order" is a perfect sham.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.): The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland has accused Irish Representatives of having no confidence in the law as administered in Ireland. But I point out that the Irish Representatives are not responsible for this, nor do they force others into this belief. It has been forced upon them by what they have seen. It is the belief of everyone of the Irish race that the law in Ireland has not been fairly administered. What did General Buller say? General Buller, in his sworn testimony before the Royal Commission, said that the law of Ireland was on the side of the rich and against the poor, and General Buller remains in an office of trust under Her Majesty's Government in Ireland. I do not intend to say anything personally offensive against the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland. I believe that everyone who knows him in this House will give him credit for his courtesy and the pains which he takes to discharge his duties; and, moreover, I do not think that he was responsible for the action of the Crown Solicitors in the Youghal case. I do not intend to enter into that case at length; but I wish to avail myself of this opportunity for stating that the people of Ireland believe that the man who met his death was foully murdered, and that the Law Officers have allowed the man who was responsible for that murder to go scot free. Of course, we know how the police in Ireland are constituted, and we do not want to be too severe upon them; but this much I think—that if the offence had been committed in Edinburgh, the man who committed it would have been hanged by the neck before now, whether with or without the consent of the Law Officers. Now, with regard to the advice which the right hon. and learned Gentleman gives to the Executive in Ireland, I should just like to refer to what he said in the House last night, in reply to my hon. Friend the Member for East Mayo (Mr. Dillon), as to the effect of the Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant in connection with the meeting to which my hon. Friend referred. I want to understand unmistakably what the law is on that matter. If I am mistaken it is because I am not a lawyer; but I may say I could not understand the meaning of the right hon. and learned Gentleman at all. I have consulted several Members of this House, Irish, Scotch, and English, including some legal gentlemen, as to what the right hon. and learned Gentleman has stated, and I have not been able to learn from them what his real meaning was. In the first instance, he stated that the Proclamation of the Lord Lieutenant did not in itself make this meeting illegal; and, later on, he proceeded to say——

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see how this question arises under the Vote before the Committee.

Mr. NOLAN: The people of Clare were affected by this Proclamation, and to-day we are discussing the Vote under which the salary of the right hon. and learned Gentleman is included. I should like the right hon. and learned Gentleman to tell us now—in time to reach both the officials of the Government in Ireland and the people in the county of Clare—what will be the position of those persons who attend the meeting. If they go to the meeting in a quiet, orderly, and peaceable manner, will the armed forces of Her Majesty be let loose on them and drive them away by force? That, Mr. Courtney, is what I desire to know, and I think that considerations of humanity as well as duty might inspire the right hon. and learned Gentleman to tell us what the position of the people will be.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): This Vote, I maintain, is one of the most important which comes before the Committee for discussion on these Estimates; it is important in every conceivable way. In the first place, it is important, as representing the actual method of procedure of the authorities in Ireland against the people, and also of the people against the authorities. You have heard this evening from several of my hon. Friends an account of the bloated salaries that are paid over to the Law Officers of the Crown; but upon that point I do not mean to touch. You have also heard about the Crown Solicitors and their salaries, as well as their method of doing the business of their office, and upon that point I should like to make a few remarks. Now, I do not know many Crown Solicitors; but in days gone by I was pretty well acquainted with the Crown Solicitors in Cork, and I wish to refer to the Cork Crown Solicitor's action in preparing jury lists, which has already been brought under the attention of this House. I know the exact way in which this thing is done; I have known it for years, and I knew it when I was more intimate with the politics of Gentlemen who sit on the opposite side of the House.

I presume I am in Order in calling attention to this subject to-night, and I desire to do so, because these illegalities are committed by men who are receiving a certain amount of money from the State; and I think that, perhaps, if the Government were to take notice of these illegalities, of which there is evidence of an unquestionable character, it would have the effect of making the Crown Solicitors act better in the future. These jury lists are prepared some time before the Assizes take place; and with regard to the Cork Assize, I find that the lists are not sent round in a fair way. Practically speaking, the preference is given to people who have landlord politics, and who call themselves supporters of law and order in the City and County of Cork. When these lists are prepared they are sent round, and every possible inquiry is made as to the private opinions and public opinions of those gentlemen who will serve on juries. This is really quite as bad as the intimidation carried on the other day in North Hunts. There are a number of tradesmen in the City of Cork who serve on juries. The list is sent round to such places as the Cork County Club; the Crown Solicitor supplies the list, and if the men who serve on the jury do not behave in the way in which the Crown Solicitor wants them to behave they are Boycotted. These lists ought not to be published beforehand, and if they are published I think that everyone will agree with me that they ought to be given to one side as well as the other. At any rate, I say they should not be produced before the day on which the Judge makes his charge, because otherwise you afford one section of the population a chance of Boycotting the other. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have no knowledge of the legal Boycotting carried on in towns in the South of Ireland, which I, for one, can bear witness to. But, passing from that subject, I merely wish to call attention to one or two facts which came under my own special notice. The first prosecution to which I call attention occurred at Millstreet on the 8th February this year. In that case I was, to a certain degree, interested. I happened to be returning from a meeting held near the River Blackwater on the occasion when the people showed their enthusiasm by building a bridge of boats across the Blackwater; and when they refused to allow the police to make use of that bridge in crossing the river, as, of course, they had a right to do, what happened? When we got within about 200 yards of the town of Millstreet two cars containing policemen drove up; we had formed a procession, and were just going into the town; when these men came up there was a little bit of chaff and a little badinage; a boy who was seated on one of the cars, having a key bugle, struck up "Harvey Duff," a tune which is not appreciated by the police in Ireland. The police drove into the car on which I sat, and because I did not want to have my leg broken I asked them to keep back, and they had to go back. The police did not go against me; but they summoned the unfortunate driver for obstruction, and the man was fined. I brought forward the case in March last; I showed how the Crown Solicitor was sent down, and had to be paid.

THE CHAIRMAN: This has no connection with the present Vote. The hon. Gentleman is dealing with the action of the police.

DR. TANNER: I said, Mr. Courtney, that the Crown Solicitor was sent down, and had to be paid; and I submit that that fact brings it under the present Vote. The men were fined, but the fines were partially remitted subsequently. But I wish to show hon. Members the way in which these prosecutions are conducted, notably in country districts—a subject which has been alluded to by my hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy). My hon. Friend referred to cases of commission, and I have now to call attention to a particular case of omission on the part of the Law Officers. I refer to the case of Inspector Milling, who was committed for trial by the magistrates of Cork. The case occupied two long days at the Cork Police Court, and it is to what happened subsequently that I particularly refer. The then Attorney General for Ireland—Mr. Hugh Holmes—quashed the verdict of the magistrates. I maintain that this was not dealing with the matter in a fair spirit. It amounted, in a case where a few Nationalist Members happened to be assaulted, to a verdict on the part of Her Majesty's Government of "Served them right." I know that to be the opinion of some hon. Gentlemen; but I do not think, if you take seriously into consideration the fact that Irish Representatives are returned by a section of the population, and a very large one, that the beating of those Irish Representatives will tend to the establishment of order, peace, and tranquillity in Ireland. What took place? I will just state a few points in connection with the case which might certainly have some weight with hon. Members opposite. I will put it in as short a way as I can. I came to the Court; a procession was formed; I went to a meeting opposite the Cork Court House; when I arrived my hon. Friend the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. John O'Connor) made a speech; shortly after he commenced speaking there was a little hustling in one corner; we found out that it was one of the Government note-takers who was being hustled; I went to him, and my hon. Friend and I got him up into the car, and would not allow anything to be said to him. Certainly, the people were rather angry, and said, "Let him get down;" when he got down he thought it better to get a little way off. Mr. Milling came up in plain clothes, notwithstanding which his characteristics were such that he could not be mistaken for anything but a Royal Irish Constabulary officer. Thereupon he told my hon. Friend to stop speaking. The policemen immediately drew their swords; the first thing I saw was a poor old woman struck by a sword; I saw the sword flash, and the poor old woman was knocked down. In reply to my remonstrance the policemen said, "You should speak to Mr. Milling." He spoke roughly, and I answered him not with the best temper in the world. What happened then? I was struck down, and Mr. Milling, on the evidence of some persons, had the brutality to kick me. I bore the marks of that some time subsequently. Hon. Gentlemen opposite may probably rejoice at that. The police are a fine body of men, and they are very good at getting up evidence; but in this case our evidence was preferred to theirs, and Mr. Milling was returned for trial. I have only told a few of the points, because were I to tell the story in detail, as it was stated by my counsel, it would take up an hour and a-half of the time of the Committee, which I wish to spare. I hope I shall receive in return some justice from the Government in the shape of a promise that they will inquire into the matter, in order to see who was right and who was wrong. Mr. Milling had solicitors and lawyers to appear for him. I do not know who paid for them, but I am given to understand that it was the Government. The case cost a deal of money, and stirred up a great deal of feeling. I am proud to say that the Mayor of Cork, who was in the chair, has been, and will continue to be in future, a strong Nationalist; but the point is that, the magistrates having given their verdict, the whole thing was afterwards quashed. That, I maintain, was not a wise or judicious proceeding. Of course, I know that in asking anything from Her Majesty's Government, at any time, on any point, we shall always be met with a blank denial, which, I suppose, is the commencement of that 20 years' government promised by the Prime Minister; but I think it is desirable, in behalf of law and order in Ireland, and in behalf of a large section of the population which may at any time be subject to the violence of the Constabulary, that attention should be paid to this matter. I am not going to call the Constabulary any names, or say anything against them, because there are many of them who are good men. I know the man who knocked me down. He was an Orangeman from the North of Ireland; and I know, also, that he got a right good handling from a Nationalist member of the Police Force within the last few months. I hope the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General will give us no scholastic or pettifogging answer on this subject, but one calculated to satisfy the wants and feeling of the people to whom I belong.

Mr. H. J. GILL (Limerick): Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman really think that his duties do not oblige him to take notice of these matters when they are brought forward? Here are several subordinates of the right hon. and learned Gentlemen who have been impugned by my hon. Friends for conduct which certainly would not have been permitted in the case of Solicitors of the Crown in England, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman before the discussion is ended leaves the Committee without anybody to answer for him in his absence—because no one here is entitled to speak for the Office of Attorney General for Ireland except himself. These cases concern the Office of Attorney General for Ireland, and that to which my hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) referred is most monstrous—the case in which the Crown Solicitor actually endeavoured in a public Court to compel a witness to incriminate himself, and in which one of the witnesses who did incriminate himself suffered eight days' imprisonment for the answer he gave to a question which he was compelled to answer, and which was put with the distinct object of incriminating the witness. Now, if the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland is not going to give us any answer or explanation of this sort of thing, and if he is not going to get up and express his disapproval and condemnation of this conduct, these gentlemen—the Crown Solicitors and jacks in office in Ireland—will continue to believe that they have the support of the House in acting as they do. Our object in bringing forward this and similar matters is to prevent men of this class acting in future as they have done in the past, and to prevent others straining the law at the command of the subordinates of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. Several of my hon. Friends have cases of the kind to bring forward, and I would urge upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman to make some adequate reply to the case put forward by my hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Limerick, W.): The case which has been stated by my hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy), and in which it is evident that the Crown Solicitor who conducted the prosecution exceeded his duty, occurred in that portion of the county of Limerick which I have the honour to represent. We have proved the case up to the hilt, and have shown that the action of the Crown Solicitor was calculated to bring the whole law in Ireland into contempt; because not only had the Crown Solicitors no witnesses whatever, but actually they issued summonses to the members of the National League in the district; but they endeavoured by examination and cross-examination to get these men to incriminate themselves. And more than that; when they found that these men took shelter under the law as it exists in Ireland, one man was sent to prison for eight days, and when he was brought up before the Court the case was not proceeded with. We are entitled to receive from the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland some assurance as to his intention with regard to this subordinate officer, and therefore we feel obliged to press the matter on the attention of the Government. Surely, if this action was legal, it would be easy for the right hon. and learned Gentleman to defend it; but we are of opinion that the Crown Solicitor took powers which the ordinary law did not give him. We ask for some assurance that this particular Crown Solicitor shall be shown whether he has acted within his powers in questioning witnesses, and endeavouring to get a conviction for an alleged offence by the course he has pursued. I trust that my hon. Friends will continue to discuss this matter, and press it on the attention of the Government until the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland returns to his place, and gives us a decided answer as to whether he thinks the Crown Solicitor has acted legally.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sure that no one who has heard the two or three able speeches made by my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) in the course of this debate will accuse him of any disposition to act unfairly in the carrying out of the duties of his Office. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Limerick (Mr. H. J. Gill) said he did not bring forward this question with a view of obtaining redress, for it was too late to do that; but he did so with a view of pressing on the attention of the Government the fact that such things as he described are possible under the existing system, and the desirability of the Attorney General for Ireland exercising greater supervision over his subordinates. My right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General was not present when the hon. Gentleman made his observations; but I can say on his behalf that he will exercise the same vigilance in the future as he has done in the past in the performance of his duties. I earnestly press upon the Committee the extreme desirability of closing, if possible, this discussion. It must be manifest that if every case is to be discussed and rediscussed in the way this has been, not only will the course of justice in Ireland be very much hindered, but it will be hardly within our power to get through the necessary Business of the Session.

MR. CLANCY: The answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland is that if he does not allow us to discuss these matters here we have no other place to discuss them in. Will he allow us to discuss them in Dublin? No, he will not. Of course he will not, and he has now made a speech and practically declined to answer the case I brought up. All he has told us is that his right hon. and learned Colleague the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) will in future bestow the same vigilant attention on these cases as he has always bestowed. That is no answer to the case I brought forward. I did not merely ask for vigilant attention. I asked him to express an opinion upon the character of these prosecutions; and not only did the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland remain silent, but now his Colleague the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary tries to avoid the point. Instead of telling us that these prosecutions are illegal, unconstitutional, arbitrary and oppressive, or are not, instead of answering the allegations brought forward by Members on this side of the House, he merely tells us that the right hon. and learned Gentleman will bestow his vigilant attention on these cases, as he has always done. That is no answer at all; and I tell the right hon. Gentleman and the Commitee that this kind of answering will not expedite the Business of the Committee. There is in this Vote five or six items relating to Crown solicitors in Ireland, and I give the right hon. Gentleman warning that I will move a reduction severally, one after another, of these items, unless he now rises, or prevails upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland to rise, and express his disapproval of these proceedings which are indefensible, and the allegations in reference to which he cannot contradict. Here is my offer. If the right hon. Gentleman will get up in his place, or if the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland will get up and express his disapproval of the act of the County Limerick magistrates in anticipating the Secret Inquiry Clause of the Crimes Act by eight months, and sending a man to gaol for refusing to answer a question which he declared would criminate him—if he will get up and say that is an act of which he disapproves, and which ought not to have been committed by any magistrate in Ireland, then this part of the discussion will close, and he will find that the transaction of Business which he desires will be hastened. But, on the other hand, if this assurance is not given, or if he cannot contradict any of the allegations that have been made, then I beg to give notice that I will move the reduction, one after the other, of all the items relating to Crown solicitors in Ireland. I see that the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland has now returned to his place, and, perhaps, it is as well that I should repeat my statement. In County Limerick a man was brought up before the county magistrates, and he was asked a question the answering of which he declared would criminate him. If the present Coercion Act had been in force the magistrates would have been entitled by law to send the man to prison until he answered. There was no power in the Statute Law to do it then; but, nevertheless, the magistrates, without any power either of Statute Law or Common Law, sent this unfortunate person to prison for eight days. I maintain that a proceeding of this kind is not only unconstitutional, but illegal, oppressive, tyrannical, and insulting to the whole population of Ireland. I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland to say whether, in his opinion, that was a proper proceeding or not? Does he approve of putting a man in gaol for refusing to answer a question he was entitled to refuse to answer? Does he approve of the style of examination and cross-examination adopted in the case of this peasant, a style of examination which would be ridiculous and preposterous on the part of the most inexperienced legal official, which no rule of law can sanction, and which must be absurd and amusing in the highest degree to every one of the eminent Queen's Counsel sitting opposite. I ask the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland if he approves or disapproves of these proceedings? If he expresses his disapproval of them, we know what will be the result. The Business of the Committee will be expedited, and the actions of the officials in Ireland will be restrained within the limits of the law. If he does not express disapproval of them, but, on the contrary, gives an equivocal answer, his agents and subordinates in Ireland will be more rampant than ever, and I promise him that the Business of the Committee will *not* be expedited.

MR. GIBSON: The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) mentioned, I think, two cases in his original observations.

MR. CLANCY: I could mention half-a-dozen.

MR. GIBSON: I am not saying what he could mention, but that he did mention two cases. He said that two men were charged with the publication of some Boycotting notices.

MR. CLANCY: I said, and this is the material point, that the men were charged with having published the placard; but it was not alleged that the placard contained a threat, or amounted to a Boycotting notice.

MR. GIBSON: I am not at liberty to express an opinion without seeing the placard, and without knowing the exact facts upon which the prosecution was founded. The hon. Gentleman did not mention what happened.

MR. CLANCY: They were held to bail for good behaviour.

MR. GIBSON: Then it appears, as far as one can judge, that there was a case against these men for the publication of this placard.

MR. CLANCY: It does not follow.

MR. GIBSON: We are bound by the action of the Court, and I, as Attorney General, have got, as the hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well, no control over the action of the Court which acts upon its own discretion.

MR. CLANCY: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but he completely misapprehends my point. I do not say he has any control over the magistrates. I did not dwell upon the conviction of these men; I did not even mention it. What I found fault with was the fact that the prosecution was undertaken by the Government and at their instance.

MR. GIBSON: I am wholly unable to say whether there was a case for a prosecution or not; but we can infer that from the magistrates' decision. I am not able to express an opinion from the evidence before me—as the hon. Gentleman can see. Even if I were so disposed, it would be irregular and improper in me as a Law Officer to express an opinion unless I had all the documents and matters before me. The hon. Gentleman must know I should be incurring an unprecedented responsibility as a Law Officer, if I expressed a categorical opinion upon statements made by hon. Gentlemen in any part of the House without having before me all the facts and documents upon which the decision of the Court was founded.

MR. CLANCY: I regret having again to interrupt the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but this case has been mentioned three or four times already in this House.

MR. GIBSON: It may have been mentioned, but my attention was not drawn to it. I am only trying to exculpate myself. I, myself, am not conversant with the facts of the case. As far as I can judge from the action of the Court, it was one in which the parties were in the wrong, and the point which the hon. Gentleman has raised is whether the Crown, through the police, ought to have prosecuted or not. Upon that I cannot express an opinion; the general rule in Ireland is that the police interfere in all cases where public interests are involved, or where there is anything in the nature of a criminal offence. Now, the next case which the hon. Gentleman raised in his original observations was that of certain boys who were charged, under a Statute of Edward III., with blowing horns. I do not know the circumstances under which these young gentlemen blew horns; but I apprehend from the fact of their having been proceeded against under the Statute of Edward III., that there was a strong idea on the part of the police that these boys acted for some purpose in connection with intimidation, because the blowing of horns or bugles, or the playing of musical instruments generally, is not necessarily regarded by the police as a criminal offence.

MR. CLANCY: The boys were under 14 years of age.

MR. GIBSON: Yes; but very many Irish boys under 14 years of age possess a great deal of intelligence, and it is quite possible to conceive their being participators in intimidatory action. Then the hon. Gentleman referred to the action of the Crown Solicitor at Drumcollogher, County Limerick. The hon. Gentleman is perfectly well aware that questions are again and again asked as to which there is very considerable conflict of opinion between counsel and the Bench as to whether or not the questions are of an incriminatory character. From the action of the Bench in this instance, I understand that the question could not be deemed incriminatory. The hon. Gentleman said that if the Crimes Act had been already passed at that time the magistrates could have sent the witness to prison for refusing to answer.

MR. CLANCY: I said that they anticipated the Coercion Act by eight months.

MR. GIBSON: The hon. Gentleman has certainly adopted a strained interpretation of that Act. His statement completely misrepresents the object and effect of that Act of Parliament. In fact, it is just as incorrect as his reference to the possible effect of that Act of Parliament on the decision of the Court. There is no provision in the Act, as the hon. Gentleman must be aware, which alters the Law of Evidence. The hon. Gentleman contemplates a case of a question being asked in a Court of Justice the answer to which could be used criminally. Now, he will see on reflection that there is no provision in the Criminal Law Procedure Act, 1887, affecting this matter. I now come to deal with this question as it stands at Common Law. In this case the witness was asked a certain question which he declined to answer. I know nothing about the facts of the case; but it appears to me a very unfair thing that, when the Court have adopted a certain view of the evidence, and have acted in their discretion, he should ask me to express an opinion concerning the action of the Court, especially in face of the fact that the person aggrieved has a remedy against the Court. I do not say whether the decision of the Court was right or not; it would be impertinent on my part to express an opinion at present of the case; so much depends upon the facts of the case, and the view the Court took of the *boná fide* of the witness. It would be an intolerable thing to any advocate, if he got the decision of a Court in his favour, for the House of Commons to censure him and hold him up as culpable for getting the decision of the Court in his favour. I must object very strongly to the pressure which the hon. Gentleman has wished to apply to me this evening, in order to cause me to express an opinion on this matter. I ask him whether it would not be unjust on my part to do so? I can conceive a very obvious state of facts in which it would have been the duty of the Crown Solicitor to ask certain questions. Suppose Boycotting resolutions were published, and certain witnesses were called to say whether they could explain who was the person really responsible for the publication of the resolutions. These witnesses may evade responsibility by saying that by answering they would incriminate themselves. I gather that the Crown Solicitor never suggested that there was any intention to prosecute any persons who were asked these questions. It would not be just or right for me to express an opinion, and I am convinced the hon. Gentlemen really does not expect me, as Attorney General, to give specific answers upon all the points he has raised.

MR. FLYNN: I do not think the answer of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland can be considered very satisfactory. My hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) has made a distinct and specific allegation against the Crown Solicitor. It is not a question of the action of the magistrates, because my hon. Friend could not bring a charge against the magistrates on this Vote. The magistrates, no doubt, acted in a very loose and extraordinary manner; but the specific charge made by my hon. Friend is against the Crown Solicitor. It amounts to this, that the Crown Solicitor sought to force this unfortunate man into answering a question, though he solemnly declared that the answering of the question would incriminate himself. Is that not a distinct breach of duty on the part of the Crown Solicitor, is that not a most culpable act on the part of the Crown Solicitor? Of course, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General made a rather clever and—if he will excuse me for saying so—a rather quibbly defence. So to my hon. Friend's allegation with regard to the Crown Solicitor and the magistrates anticipating the operation of the Crimes Act by eight months, what my hon. Friend meant to convey was that under the 1st section of the Crimes Act—that section which deals with preliminary inquiries—a man may be brought before a Resident Magistrate, and not even the fact that the answering of a question put to him may incriminate himself will prevent him being called upon to answer any question the Resident Magistrate sitting in private may put to him. That is the course which the Crown Solicitor seems to have adopted in this case. Over and over again the witness stated that the answering of the question would incriminate himself. It is all very well to say the witness had his rights at Common Law: he had his right at Common Law not to answer the question; but for all that we find that this Crown Solicitor made an elementary mistake of this kind. This Crown Solicitor must have known his duty better than to do what he did. We are not here to inquire into the motives of the Crown Solicitor; we are seeking to take cognizance of the fact that the Crown Solicitor who is to be paid in this Vote acted most illegally, and that the result of his action was that this unfortunate man got eight days' imprisonment. It is well that the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland should remember that no depositions were taken—a very remarkable incident—in this entire case, a case of sheer tyranny and despotism. We are entitled to call upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman to give us such a pledge that these things shall not occur again in Ireland. He even knows that the Crimes Act just passed gives powers, ample, and wide, and large enough to destroy almost every vestige of liberty in Ireland. We ask the right hon. and learned Attorney General's protection; it is our most obvious duty as the Representatives of the people to call upon the Representative of law and order in Ireland, the Representative of the Government entrusted with the carrying out of law, to give us a pledge that in future his subordinate will not administer the law solely in the interest of any one class of the community. My hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) referred a while ago—and, if I mistake not, the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland was not in his place at the time—to an even more flagrant case of misconduct on the part of the Crown Solicitor than that brought under the notice of the Committee by my hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy). It is a case which was brought before the attention of the House on a former occasion, and one which has not yet been thoroughly discussed. I should certainly have preferred that we should have had an opportunity of bringing this case on at a time when a more leisurely discussion of it might have taken place, because I am persuaded that we could have convinced hon. Members that in this case there was a serious failure of justice, and that this failure of justice was entirely and exclusively owing to the action of the Attorney General for Ireland. We have nothing to do with the fact that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the present Attorney General for Ireland was not the Attorney General at the time the case happened; but we have to do with the fact that the Irish Attorney General receives a large salary, and has within the past 12 months been guilty of several serious breaches of his duty by omission and commission. We have a serious bill of indictments to bring against the Irish Attorney General. The case to which my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork referred occurred in the City of Cork last December. I did not see the events which led to the assault, though I was on the spot immediately afterwards. I confess I should not be in Order in relating the details of the assault, and therefore I shall only give the Committee those details which bear out my contention—namely, that there was a serious and culpable neglect of duty on the part of the Attorney General in not carrying out the law. On the occasion in question there was a meeting of a more or less public character in Cork. An attack was made on that meeting by an officer of police in plain clothes, and a large body of men armed with batons and sword bayonets; the attack was made without warning, as was proved by the evidence of the policemen themselves. My hon. Friend the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. John O'Connor) was violently assaulted and thrown down, and my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork was also subjected to most brutal treatment. Both of my hon.

Friends summoned the District Inspector in charge of the police before the magistrates within a few days of the time of the occurrence, and the District Inspector served summonses on my hon. Friends; therefore they all came before the Court on equal terms. After the closest investigation of the case, the Cork magistrates returned the District Inspector, Milling, to take his trial for the assault. What happened? The Attorney General for Ireland—who is now Mr. Justice Holmes—refused to go a step further in the case, and District Inspector Milling went scot-free. Does such action on the part of a responsible Officer of the Crown promote respect for law and order in Ireland? Does it not burn deep into the hearts of the people a belief that there is one law for one set of men and another law for another set of men? When a Bench of Magistrates have returned the man for trial, why should the Attorney General refuse to send him for trial? It cannot be alleged that a fair trial could not be had in Cork, because a special jury could have been empannelled and a going Judge of Assize could have been surely trusted by the Government to do what was right and proper. It is on account of actions such as this on the part of responsible Law Officers that the administration of justice in Ireland is looked upon with jealousy and suspicion by 19 out of every 20 of the population. I do not know that out of the many examples we have had of extraordinary action taken by the Attorney Generals for Ireland there has been anything more serious and extraordinary than this case of the non-prosecution of District Inspector Milling last winter. What redress have we in such cases as this? We know what redress we should have if a case like this occurred in any city of England. The Press, for instance, would cry out for redress. The Irish Press cried out. *The Freeman's Journal* in Dublin, the Cork papers, and, indeed, all the popular Press cried out in indignation against the miscarriage of justice in this case. They said that the Attorney General had failed in the most obvious and ordinary duties of his Office. What attention did the right hon. and learned Gentleman pay to the Press of Ireland? Public opinion was against this monstrous miscarriage of justice, but the public opinion of Ireland has no effect upon Irish Law Officers. Is it conceivable that a case of this kind could occur in England? Let us take the case of the Salvation Army. Supposing two Radical or Tory Members went down to address a meeting of the Salvation Army and were assaulted by the police; supposing that the Inspector in charge of the police was brought up before the local magistrates, and that they returned him upon informations for trial; supposing that the Attorney General for England refused to send the Inspector of Police to trial, why you would have a howl of indignation all over England, you would have an outburst of public opinion that no Government could stand against. Allusion has been made more than once in the debates on the Irish Estimates to the case of Miss Cass, and how quickly Members of the Government found it necessary to take action in the Cass case, because they found that there was a strong opinion on all sides of the House, and on the part of the English public generally, as to the injustice that had been done. All that we want is investigation; but our desires are of no moment whatever to Irish Law Officers or to Members of Her Majesty's Government. Our contention is that the occurrences in Ireland to which we have called attention are scandalous, that they tend to discredit the administration of justice, and that they still further help to provoke all the elements of social disorder. This is only natural. It is only natural that it should be so, when the people see that the men who ought to be the very first to see that there is an impartial administration of justice, are the very first to take sides against them because they happen to belong to a political Party. We feel bound to make a stand, to tell the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland that every little bit of tyranny in Ireland is closely noted, and the people are watching anxiously for the golden moments that are fast approaching. Every possible persecution that legal tyranny can devise is heaped upon those who have been or are looked upon as popular leaders, as men who are engaged on the popular side in this great struggle. We ask that the men who administer the law shall be kept within the narrow limits of the law. A close eye will be kept on every local tyrant, upon every Crown Solicitor, on District Inspector Milling, and on all other men who act unconstitutionally and illegally. Such of us who are in a position to do so will keep a close record of the doings of these men, and we shall not fail, when the Estimates are brought on for discussion, again to bring the conduct of these officials to the notice of the House much more persistently than we have done on the present occasion. We have made a distinct case out for the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland's attention this evening. Our points are whether Crown Solicitors are to go so obviously outside their duty, as Mr. Leahy did at Drumcollogher, and whether such men as District Inspector Milling should receive exceptional protection at the hands of the Attorney General for Ireland. We want distinct answers upon these questions, and upon the answers we receive will largely depend whether we consider it necessary or not to continue to discuss at greater length and with greater minuteness the details of this Vote.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.): Mr. Courtney, it is not a very pleasant duty for Irish Representatives in this House to have from time to time to bring forward allegations against those who administer the law in Ireland. It is not a duty we at all care for. We would much prefer that there was no occasion to draw the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland to these matters. The Government, however, seem to be altogether in the hands of the Law Officers whose conduct we challenge. That is a very regrettable circumstance; but, fortunately, the complaints that are made against the Irish Law Officers of the Crown and their subordinates in reference to the administration of justice are not now confined to Irish Members, but many English Members who are well versed in law themselves join with us in complaining. This matter has actually become an International one, and it is a matter of humiliation for Englishmen, especially Englishmen connected with the administration of law, that it has become an International question. A short time ago a complaint was made upon representations of the Law Officers of the Crown in Ireland of certain action of Irishmen in the United States. The answer the President of the United States gave ought to make every Englishman blush. The President of the United States said in his answer that if the English Government would prevent the corruption of the Irish Judges, and the hiring of witnesses, and the corruption of other sources of justice in Ireland, there would be less to complain of in Ireland or in America. This, therefore, has become an International question. Our Law Officers have caused other countries to look with contempt upon our sense of justice and fair play: the President of the United States condemned the administration of justice in Ireland, and he did that in an International document. I maintain it is the Members who have been retuned to this House by Trinity College, Dublin, who are largely responsible for this condition of affairs. Year after year we are answered in the same platitudes hunted up from *Hansard*. We know when we raise discussions upon the Estimates what answers we shall receive; we can anticipate the answers, which is much to be regretted. Members of the Government accuse us of obstructing Business, whereas it is they themselves who do the very thing they complain of in us. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) says it is necessary for the Law Officers of the Crown to make good their case. I deny that if a Law Officer of the Crown believes a prisoner to be innocent he has any right to push the case against the prisoner. I am firmly convined that this Vote provides for the hiring of witnesses in my own county. Hiring of witnesses or suborning of testimony is paid for in this Vote.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman has made a statement which is absolutely uncorroborated by the Vote or Estimate as put before the Committee, and he is not at all confining himself to the Question under debate. I must ask him not to wander, as he has been wandering, from the Question under discussion.

Mr. BLANE: I understand that this is a Vote for Criminal Prosecutions in Ireland, and under the head of criminal prosecutions the hiring of witnesses is forced to come up.

THE CHAIRMAN: What does the hon. Gentleman mean by the hiring of witnesses?

MR. BLANE: I mean the payment of witnesses' expenses. There are other charges for witnesses which I believe may fairly be taken as charges for the hiring of witnesses. The Law Officers of the Crown will not give us any answer in reference to the conduct of their subordinates: they allow their subordinates to challenge jurors in criminal trials without showing any cause, but manifestly for the purpose of obtaining a conviction. I gather from the words of the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland that it is the duty of the Law Officers of the Crown to press a prosecution as far as they can. That is not my opinion. I do not think the hon. and learned Attorney General for England (Sir Richard Webster) would prosecute or allow any of his subordinates to prosecute in a case in which he thought the accused party was innocent. I have seen cases in England in which the Attorney General has said it was no part of his duty to prosecute to a conviction if he thought himself that the evidence was not sufficient to convict upon. I think this should be so in Ireland. In Ireland the Law Officers seem to think it is their duty to obtain a conviction at any cost, and they invariably do this by exercising the right of challenge. I have been challenged myself on a jury; I have been told before 2,000 people to stand aside. The reason was that I had not the confidence of the Crown. I certainly had the confidence of the people to the extent that I was returned by them to this House. Though I may be very ignorant of the law, I presume I am just as good a judge of facts as the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland himself; at least I claim to be so. Will the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland put a stop to the practice of which we complain? No, he will not do so, I do not think he dare do so; the right of challenge is part of the constitution in Ireland; it is the well worn way by which justice, in my opinion, is perverted. If we had a better administration of law in our country we should not be found, at any rate, complaining in this House. I have ventured to make these observations because I thought it was my duty to do so—I may add my painful duty. It is no pleasure to me or to any of my Friends to stand up here and bring these painful affairs before the attention of the Committee; we would much rather the Estimates passed without any need of discussion. This Estimate would unquestionably be speedily passed if the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland would tell us that the law will be adminstered in such a way that the people may have confidence in its just administration.

MR. CLANCY: I admit that the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland was different in tone from that of his right hon. Colleague the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary seemed to make very light indeed of the cases I have brought forward. The imprisonment of a man in Ireland, especially if he is a peasant, seems to be a matter of no concern to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. I confess I was much disappointed at the general tone of the right hon. Gentleman's remarks. At the same time, I cannot admit for one moment the sufficiency of the explanation of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, courteous though it was in the extreme. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General is distinguished by his courtesy in this House; but I cannot admit that what he has said upon this matter is at all satisfactory. On no single point can I pretend for one moment that the answer of the Government is a satisfactory one. I do not, however, intend to divide the Committee on this occasion; but if I find a suitable opportunity on Report I shall certainly draw the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman again to the three or four cases I have cited this evening. I shall do so for the reason that I regard this tyrannical exercise of power in the country districts as of far more importance than that which took place in Dublin in the full light of day, and in the face of the civilized world. The things which take place in the country districts of Ireland are hidden from sight; the Press is not represented, and the consequence is that the officers of the Crown, in league with the magistrates, do just as they please. They trample upon law with impunity, and we find that when we bring matters before the House of Commons we can get no redress. For this reason I shall feel it my duty to refer again to these matters on Report, and I hope that then the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland will be sufficiently grounded in the facts of these cases to be able to give an assurance that the tyrannical proceedings I have described to-night shall not be perpetrated in the future.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.): One of the things we have most reason to complain of is that, no matter what cases are brought against the Law Officers of the Crown, no satisfactory answer is given. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, or one or other of his Colleagues, rises in his place and makes a very reasonable and powerful speech; but nothing is done. In fact, the only way to promotion for an Irish Law Officer is to outrage the law, to proceed in the most extreme and most severe manner against the people he happens to have thought fit to proceed against. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has said in the course of his speeches that he would examine these cases carefully. I have the most profound mistrust of lawyers, especially of Crown lawyers. I have no doubt the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland desires to do that which is fair and just; but it is entirely out of his power; he is helpless in the Office he holds to do justice to the peasants in the West of Ireland. He is as helpless in the matter as he is to reverse the course of the seasons. Cases are got up by men living in localities. A certain number of informers are engaged, and as there is great repugnance in Ireland on the part of the people to become informers, the authorities have to fall back on a class of most dissolute men. Together with this, political feeling is so high that in every case involving Party considerations the Crown resorts to the practice of packing a jury. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland may be opposed in principle to the packing of juries; but I venture to say that in a case which bears any Party aspect he willingly submits to the process of packing the jury. On the one hand you have a packed jury, and on the other you have the evidence of some vile wretches as to circumstances that may, or may not, have transpired. The evidence of these men is collected and collated, and put before the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, in a scientific way, by men who are well up in their business. The right hon. and learned Attorney General has no personal knowledge of the facts; he has a multitude of duties to perform, and I ask him whether it is within his power to form a correct or just opinion as to the propriety or otherwise of the different prosecutions. The laws of Ireland are very frequently changed. We have Acts of Parliament passed Session after Session interfering with the rights of tenants, and that gives rise, of course, to a great amount of litigation. The landlords naturally are the first to have recourse to law, and they do avail themselves very largely of the process of litigation. The result is that throughout the country the services of counsel are largely in demand. These counsel desire to become Crown Prosecutors; they regard that position as the very first step in the ladder, and the desire for these appointments is remarkably strong. The salaries given by the Government are so large, and the patronage obtained from the landlord class so great, that nowadays counsel turn away from the people in such numbers that it is almost impossible for a poor man who espouses the popular side to get a solicitor in the country parts of Ireland. In former times in Ireland counsel, even those engaged by the Crown, were very popular. In former times Ireland produced great and distinguished counsel, counsel such as Curran, O'Connell, and Butt; but to-day the popularity of Irish counsel is fast dying out, and it will, in the end, come to this, that lawyers in Ireland will be just as much disrespected as common policemen. [*Laughter.*] The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland may laugh; but he knows that what I say is perfectly true. The Legal Profession is going down every day in Ireland, because members of it are becoming more and more unpopular with the people. I do not, however, wish to press the point further; perhaps I should incur your displeasure, Mr. Courtney, if I did so. It is obvious, however, that the present system of administering the law in Ireland is radically bad, and that the only way in which it can be altered is by the total abolition of Dublin Castle itself. I regret very much that the hon. Gentleman who moved this Amendment does not intend to divide the Committee, because I really think this matter ought to be brought to a Division. There is no power entrusted to lawyers in Ireland that is not put to a bad purpose; but I have no desire to occupy the time of the Committee any further upon the point.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I hope the Government are now in a position to afford me some information on the subject I referred to a while ago.

MR. GIBSON (who was indistinctly heard) was understood to say that he had received no information with regard to the case the hon. Member had referred to, and was not in a position to give a reply. Moreover, he understood that prosecutions were pending; and, if that were the case, even if he had information on the subject he would be unable to go into the question.

MR. TUITE: Did the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself direct the prosecutions?

MR. GIBSON was understood to reply in the negative.

MR. TUITE: I have received sufficient information from Mullingar to enable me to discuss on this Vote the conduct of the Government in regard to this prosecution. I have learned that Mr. John P. Hayden is about to be prosecuted for attending an eviction at Tang, in County Westmeath, and that 27 others are also to be prosecuted. I have not received the details of the charges to be brought against these persons; but I understand that the summonses are so framed that cumulative sentences may be passed. I think it a mean and contemptible dodge to put one of my principal constituents into prison without a fair and legitimate trial. This is, I must say, a desperate act on the part of the Government. The County Westmeath is, at this period, in a state of absolute peace, and has been so for a considerable time. The landlords and tenants there, except in three or four instances, are living on the very best of terms with each other. The tenantry in some cases, no doubt, have borne hardships patiently. They have waited for legislation which, to a certain extent —a very inadequate extent—has now been provided. But the Government will not allow that legislation to take effect. They have started these prosecutions against men who have done nothing more than offer a passive resistance, and by no means a violent resistance, to the evictions. So passive, indeed, has been the resistance, that the Sheriff of Westmeath has been able to travel 22 miles across the mountains to effect the evictions without the slightest escort. Surely that shows the passive condition of the district. It will be seen, under these circumstances, that anything in the form of a prosecution must be in the last degree irritating to these people, so peacefully disposed at this moment. I should like to know who directed these prosecutions? Are we in Ireland to have the administration of the Crimes Act left in the hands of the magistrates? Are the magistrates to direct prosecutions in every case, or is the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland to be consulted before prosecutions take place. I say this is a monstrous thing, and unless some explanation is given by the right hon. and learned Gentleman I shall feel it my duty to move the reduction of the Vote by such a sum as will mark the sense of the Committee on the action of the Government.

MR. GIBSON: I would point out to the hon. Member the extreme inconvenience, if not danger, of discussing a matter which is the subject of a pending prosecution. I would ask the hon. Member not to enter into the case for the reason that I have received no information with regard to it, and am, therefore, unable to give a satisfactory answer. I have telegraphed to Dublin for particulars.

MR. TUITE: The Government, I suppose, have made up their minds as to the sentence they will pass on these gentlemen, and therefore this prosecution is a mockery and a sham altogether. I will read to the Committee what I suppose is the charge brought against Mr. Hayden. Mr. Hayden attended an eviction at Tang, and here is a report published in his own paper, *The Westmeath Examiner*, on the 20th of August, with reference to the eviction—

> "The Head Constable, who previously sought to strike down the people, now sought to work up a little prosecution by calling the Resident Magistrate's attention to an observation of Mr. John P. Hayden, T.C., of *The Westmeath Examiner*. He told Mr. Beckett, R.M., that Mr. Hayden told the girl 'to get them to break the

gate.' Mr. Beckett inquired of Mr. Hayden if he had said so, and the latter replied—'No, Sir; I told the girl who owns this land to close the gate on the trespassers.' Then the Head Constable made answer—'Aye; and he said break the gate.' 'Yes,' said Mr. Hayden; 'I told her let those who are trespassing break the gate if they dare.' Mr. Beckett did not think the matter worthy of the attention which the Head Constable gave it."

It is on that occurrence, no doubt, that the prosecution of my hon. Friend is to be founded, and I want to know from the Government what instructions they have given to the Resident Magistrates of the district in this case? I believe, Sir, that the landlord in the district who evicted the tenants on that day has everything to do with these prosecutions, and that it is simply a dodge on the part of the landlords to strike terror into the hearts of an unfortunate people who are at present unable to pay their rack-rents. This is an attack made upon a people who are disposed to quiet and peace. The district is in perfect peace; and further than all this, I believe that Mr. Hayden is now attacked simply because he is a political opponent of the Government, and is a popular advocate of the cause of liberty. Mr. Hayden is the proprietor——

THE CHAIRMAN: I think I must appeal to the hon. Member not to put such a very dangerous strain on the practice of debate on the Estimates as he proposes to inflict upon it. This, I understand, is a case in which a prosecution has been commenced. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland says that he knows nothing about it, and is quite unacquainted with the circumstances and the reason for why the prosecution was started, and the hon. Member (Mr. Tuite) has himself proceeded as he says on an hypothesis. It is a very great strain, if not an abuse of discussion on the Estimates, to raise such a question as this at such a stage. The hon. Member is, no doubt, moved by sympathy with his Friend, but I put it to him whether it would not be advisable to wait for further information so that the debate might proceed on surer grounds?

MR. TUITE: I bow to your ruling, Sir. I must say, however, that I feel very strongly on this matter, and that I feel it the right hon. and learned Gentleman's duty to understand this case, and to appreciate his duties with regard to this and similar prosecutions. What is he receiving his, salary for? The right hon. and learned Gentleman no doubt has been very courteous — I appreciate all that—but at the same time he ought to have received some particulars about this case which concerns one of my constituents. If he has not been consulted in the matter, perhaps Mr. Jury-packer O'Brien the Solicitor General has been consulted. Perhaps it is between Mr. Jury-packer O'Brien and Dublin Castle that communications with regard to this case are going on. Is it Mr. O'Brien who would communicate to the Government the particulars of such a case? If it is, we shall receive whatever information we may get with the confidence which everything which comes from that person deserves. Now, Sir, I do not wish to intrude further on the Committee, and I will only say that I feel very strongly on this matter and will take the very earliest opportunity of bringing it up again, when, I trust, the right hon. and learned Gentleman will be able to give me some information with regard to it.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): I only wish to intervene for one moment, Sir, in order to ask how this prosecution of 16 of my constituents can have arisen out of evictions which occurred at Tang, and which, as the Government have previously admitted in answer to a previous question, had been carried out so peaceably that the parish priest congratulated the Constabulary on the peaceful attitude of the people. If the people were so peaceful and orderly, I should like to know how this disturbance could have arisen? If the right hon. and learned Gentleman (the Irish Attorney General) would answer that question, I should be obliged to him.

MR. GIBSON: The question and answer the hon. Member has referred to as having taken place in this House were to this effect. I was asked whether the police had brutally batoned the people in carry out this eviction in Westmeath, and the answer was that on the contrary they had behaved with exemplary forbearance, the Catholic clergyman expressing his sense of their forbearance. That is in no way inconsistent, however, with there having been obstruction to the course of the law on the part of those persons who, it may be, are about to be prosecuted. I do not say that as wishing to imply that there has been obstruction, or that any persons who may be prosecuted are guilty of the charges which may be brought against them. I only say it in order to show how prosecutions may arise. Of the circumstances themselves, I know nothing.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I think the hon. Members for Westmeath have done no more than their duty in bringing this matter forward. I go further and say that I believe they would have failed in their duty if they had not brought this matter forward. I would submit to the Committee that the law in Ireland places the duty of initiating and proceeding with a prosecution of this kind upon the shoulders of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite.

MR. GIBSON: No, no!

MR. SEXTON: Yes. The right hon. and learned Gentleman can either allow these prosecutions to proceed or can prevent them. If, as the right hon. and learned Gentleman says he is at the present moment unaware of the facts which for several days have been notorious in Ireland that would lead me to the conclusion that this Vote should be postponed or that the right hon. and learned Gentleman should give an undertaking that he will be prepared to make a statement on Report. It is fitter that he should do this than that we should allow the state of his mind at this moment to be made the cause of our foregoing a discussion on a matter of urgent public importance. Is the right hon. and learned Gentleman aware that the Sheriff proceeded to this district of Tang to carry out these evictions with his escort of four bailiffs, but without any policemen or any armed attendants whatever? If that is so, and if the Sheriff of Westmeath was able to proceed in a matter, and on an occasion so likely to excite public passion as the eviction of a number of persons from their homes—if he was able to proceed without a guard of police or soldiers, that, it seems to me, is sufficient to show that the district was in a quiet state. Then another fact to which the Committee must have regard is that the Sheriff having gone through the Town of Mullingar with his four bailiffs, and without an escort was able on that day to vindicate the law, and to enforce the processes of the law placed in his hands by evicting all the people mentioned in the processes from their homes. I say that if the Sheriff went without escort, and was able to evict these people without resistance it would appear that *primâ facie* a case is established of the impolicy of these prosecutions, and I would say that looking at the state of County Westmeath, as established by police returns which show an absence of crime, that public policy dictates that the right hon. and learned Gentleman ought to accept my view of this matter—that view being that a number of highly respectable persons whose characters are unimpeachable should not be prosecuted under the powers the Government have lately acquired in the state in which we find this county. If these prosecutions take place what will be their result? Why the result will be to implant feelings of resentment, possibly of exasperation in the minds of the great body of the people of Westmeath, and to keep open a sore in the county by placing a number of men in prison for acts which though they may have exceeded the bounds of discretion were certainly conceived in the public interest. I notice also a very curious thing which is this, that these men are summoned on double sets of summonses. Surely when the law is vindicated, when the Sheriff has carried out his object, when the people have been driven from their homes, and the landlord has obtained the full effect of the letter of the law and the last atom of his rights, I may ask what more can be desired? Has not the landlord had his way, has not the Sheriff had his way, have not the Government had their way? Why should you pursue these people vindictively in this way, and issue double sets of summonses against them? Let the Government proceed fairly in this matter. Let them indict the defendants either for riot or for resistance whichever the evidence in their hands might seem more fully to support, but do not let them avail themselves of double sets of summonses, otherwise it will seem that they are actuated by a cowardly and vindictive policy, and that their object is to enable magistrates to inflict sentences apparently light—namely, three weeks for obstruction and three weeks for riot—to inflict sentences separately which if inflicted in one term would entitle the defendants to an appeal.

Sentences of this kind if inflicted in instalments, neither of them exceeding a month, would deprive the defendants of the right of appeal, and would place them at the mercy of two Resident Magistrates. That is not a true interpretation of the law, and I would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman to require the Local Authorities to proceed either on one summons or on the other, but not on both. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has appealed to my hon. Friend (Mr. Tuite) to be silent on this question — silent where silence would mean approval of illegal doings on the part of those who put the Crimes Act into operation. If we were silent on these things every petty magistrate and every little pasha in Ireland will have his own way. My hon. Friends the Members for Westmeath are intelligent enough to know that whatever else may serve an Irishman in the House of Commons silence never does.

Mr. HAYDEN (Leitrim, S.): When the case comes on next Wednesday, I shall be able to bring before the right hon. and learned Gentleman sufficient evidence to show him that this prosecution is undertaken altogether from vindictive motives. It is not undertaken in the public interest, but to punish men who have successfully carried out the Plan of Campaign in Westmeath. I can assure him that he is very much mistaken if he thinks that the men who have taken part in operations of that kind, which have had for their object the alleviation of the distress of the tenantry, are not prepared to accept the consequences their acts entail. Not even a few months' imprisonment under the Crimes Act will deter them from doing their duty.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I would draw the attention of the Committee to a statement which has fallen from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland. He has admitted that he knows nothing at all about this prosecution, and that he has wired to Dublin Castle, and that they know nothing about it. Evidently, then, he would imply that the Local Authorities, or local individuals, have initiated this prosecution on their own hook. Very well; but when once a case is brought into Court, and when once the authorities are moved, the Government are committed to the preceedings; and we know how, under such circumstances, they strain every point in order to insure success. This is a serious matter for all of us representing constituencies in Ireland. I speak as representing a constituency far more disturbed than any part of Westmeath. It is important that we should know from the Government who are responsible for the conduct of these prosecutions—we should know whether every local despot and petty magnate, who may be a landlord, and who may be hand-and-glove with the district Inspector, is to be allowed to organize a series of important prosecutions far-reaching in their effect upon public liberty? We have a right to ask the Government to tell us something on this point—we have a right to complain that their only answer should be—"We know nothing at all about it." I think that this is a very grave state of affairs. If we allow this sort of thing to pass, we shall really be losing our grip on Parliament. No matter how disagreeable it is for hon. Members on the other side of the House to have to listen to us night after night talking about subjects with regard to which they would rather have us silent, I would tell them that we have reason to stand up and speak in Parliament. If we did not trouble the House, as we are doing to-night, if we did not strain every nerve to bring light to bear upon transactions such as this that forms the subject of our complaint to-night, if we did not investigate these transactions, it would hardly be possible for any decent man to live in Ireland. I could myself bear strong and distinct testimony to the great value of putting questions in this House with regard to Irish grievances. I remember—I do not care to refer to these things, but it is necessary to do so now for the purposes of illustration—I remember when I was favoured at one time with some attention under a previous Crimes Act. I got six months' imprisonment under it. I remember when my case was brought before this House that every time a question was put in this House with regard to it, some concession or easement was granted to me, and no doubt at the time I appreciated it. I believe, if I had been kept in gaol up to this time, that, as the result of the interrogations of my hon. Friends, the Prison Authorities would now be supplying me with turtle soup and champagne. I did not seek these favours, and I only mention them as a clear and distinct proof of the value of calling attention to these subjects in this House. The Local Authorities in Ireland are afraid of these discussions. Well, inasmuch as we are approaching the dark night of the Parliamentary Recess in a short time, the right hon. and learned Gentleman will be freed from the importunities of the Irish Members. I want, therefore, while there is still time, to impress upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman the desirability of acquainting himself with the circumstances of these prosecutions before he allows them to take place—I do not say with the circumstances of every pettifogging case, but with the circumstances of every serious matter that arises—wherever there is a case involving the imprisonment of a number of respectable persons in a district, especially in a district where you have begun to use the Crimes Act for the first time that he should not allow proceedings to go on without knowing the nature of them, and without being able to accept full responsibility for what is done. Seeing that the Crimes Act was wrenched from our grasp by the closure, and taken from this House to be applied to Ireland, it is not too much for us to expect and to demand that the Goverment should make themselves aware of every step that is taken under it—certainly of every initial step taken under it—and that they should be ready at any moment to enter into a discussion of the cases. It would not be proper now, not having the summonses or the facts before us to go into the merits of the cases referred by my hon. Friend; but it is a very strong proceeding, when a case of this magnitude arises, if it is allowed to go on without the right hon. and learned Gentleman giving us an answer as to who directed this prosecution, what it is for, and what is the policy at the root of it? It is not enough to say people are prosecuted in Ireland because they broke the law. People sometimes break the law with impunity, and are sometimes prosecuted vindictively, without having broken the law; and I think that every Member representing an Irish constituency ought to do his best to extract from the right hon. and learned Gentleman a promise that he will apply his mind to these serious cases, and that when we come to the discussion of them, as I am sure we shall do in January or February next, when we meet again, he will be able to tell us on what grounds it was he advised these prosecutions, or allowed them to take place. He must accept the responsibility of the initial steps that are taken, as well as all further prosecutions. If he does not do that, but allows the local police and magisterial authorities to take the initiative, I say that the Government are committed to a policy of prosecutions which will shock the feelings of all other countries—which the better judgment of all but the Government and their supporters will condemn. The small Local Authorities cannot be condemned as it will be possible to condemn high officials. The Head Constable we know backs the Sergeant; the District Inspector backs the Head Constable; the County Inspector backs the District Inspector; the Crown Prosecutor backs the County Inspector, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman will back the Crown Prosecutor and all the rest of them; so that he it is who is and must be responsible. We want to know where the real initiative is in these grave cases, and we have a right to demand an answer.

MR. GIBSON: The hon. Member says that, because these prosecutions are several days old I ought to know something about them. I have already said, and I now repeat, that I have no knowledge of these prosecutions. For aught I know, they may be private prosecutions. If they are private prosecutions they cannot, as hon. Gentlemen opposite must know very well, in any way come under my observation.

MR. TUITE: These are not private prosecutions.

MR. GIBSON: The hon. Gentleman has not told us the names of the prosecutors.

MR. TUITE: Here is a telegram I have received to-day—

> "Both summonses for Tang Evictions. See *Examiner* for Saturday week. One for riot; other, resistance and obstruction—"

An hon. MEMBER: Name.

MR. TUITE: T. H. Davis is the name.

> "One for riot; other, resistance and obstruction under Section 2, Sub-section 3 a. Will be heard at Glasson, Wednesday next. Two summonses framed to get accumulative sentence and thus prevent appeal. Have just heard 26 others summoned. Hayden."

The telegram says the prosecution is under Section 2, Sub-section 3a, of the Crimes Act. Surely, then, that is a Government prosecution.

Mr. GIBSON: I am quite right in my surmise. The name of the prosecutor is not mentioned in the telegram, and, for all the Committee knows, the prosecution may be private.

Mr. SEXTON: Under the Crimes Act?

Mr. GIBSON: It is perfectly possible, on the information the hon. Member has submitted to us, that these prosecutions may be private prosecutions, because I may tell the hon. Gentleman that if any person felt himself aggrieved by resistance offered to the action of the Sheriff, there is nothing to prevent him taking out the summonses. There is nothing to prevent a bailiff taking out a summons if he has been obstructed, and the point we have to deal with is whether these are private summonses or official summonses. But, whether they are or not, I have said I am not acquainted with the facts. I have informed hon. Members that I have wired for the facts, and notwithstanding that, they will persist in going on with the inquiry. With regard to what has fallen from them, I do not think it would be right for me to make any statement as to matters of which I know nothing—it would not be right for me to make any statement without knowing who the prosecutor is, and without knowing anything about the facts. With regard to the allegation that two summonses have been issued in each case, that allegation may or may not be well founded, but even if it is the two summonses may be requisite under the two heads to ensure that a sufficient amount of material is obtained to bring home the guilt of the parties. It might be that the facts in the one summons were not sufficient to support one charge, and that it would be necessary to proceed under the other; but, as I say, I am not able to discuss the matter without knowing what the facts are. I cannot go into the matter under existing circumstances at all. An hon. Member said, in the course of this discussion, that no prosecution should ever be initiated without some preliminary direction on the part of the Attorney General. Let me mention what has been often stated by my right hon. and learned Predecessor in this Office—namely, that if the Irish Attorney General is to direct every prosecution in the first instance—that is to say, in its initial stage, before the summons is taken out—he would require to have every day a day of 48 hours, and to work through every hour. He has, as things are at present, an enormous amount of work to do; but it would be impossible for him, even though he worked like a slave, to get through the business hon. Gentlemen wish him to attend to. The directing of prosecutions is not a thing which can be done by the finger; it is not a thing which can be done by turning over page after page. I have done a great deal of finger business, and everyone who has been at the Bar knows the immense amount of work which is done in that way; but in the matter of these prosecutions, it is necessary to proceed very carefully, to read a great deal of evidence, and a great many communications which may be brought before you. The method of proceeding is this. In the initial stages steps are taken by the parties on the spot, and when the cases have proceeded some distance, they are brought before the attention of the Attorney General. If the cases are of an important character which should be proceeded with at once, they are placed in the hands of the Crown Solicitor, and are sent to the Attorney General; but as hon. Members opposite are aware, it is only in very few cases that that course is pursued. In the great majority of cases the police prosecute. It is only when cases have arrived at a certain period of development that they are submitted to the Attorney General. To say that no prosecutions should take place throughout the whole of Ireland until they received the sanction of the Attorney General would be to require an amount of work from that official which it would be physically impossible for him to undertake. I state that at once. I do not avoid the responsibility of all Crown prosecutions. I think the responsibility for all prosecutions initiated by officials representing the Government should be assumed by the Attorney General; and let not hon. Gentleman opposite think that because I have not personally directed a prosecution in the first instance that I wish to evade responsibility for that prosecution. I desire to do nothing of the kind. I am responsible for the action of every Sessional Crown Solicitor and every Crown Prosecutor; but I would repeat the appeal I addressed to hon. Gentlemen opposite at the beginning—I would ask them not to continue this discussion until we know what the nature of the prosecution is. I have done the utmost in my power to obtain information, and I do not think hon. Members can charge me with treating the case with indifference.

MR. DEASY: I would press the right hon. and learned Gentleman to give us some kind of assurance that on the Report stage of this Vote he will be able to give us a full explanation of the matter referred to by the hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton.) That is a very fair proposition, particularly after the speech we have just heard from the right hon. and learned Gentleman. He says he undertakes to be responsible for every prosecution under the Crimes Act. Well, Sir, if he is responsible for every prosecution under the Crimes Act, why not in a couple of days hence—say, on Monday, when the Report stage of the Vote will be taken—be prepared to come down and, in a few sentences, give my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast the particulars he has demanded. Let me point out that the alleged offences in respect of which these prosecutions are about to take place occurred a fortnight ago, and that it is only reasonable to think that the right hon. and learned Gentleman should have been consulted in a matter of such grave importance as this is—particularly as the Government are at the initial stages of putting the Crimes Act into operation. This is one of the most important prosecutions which have yet been initiated. The prosecution of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. William O'Brien) is, perhaps, the most important; but the prosecution we are now discussing is only of secondary importance to that, on account of the importance of the gentleman who is mainly interested, and are we to believe that the Law Officers of the Crown in Dublin Castle have not been consulted in regard to this case? Why it is not one man, but 27 gentlemen, who are to be prosecuted, and the prosecution is to take place under the 2nd clause of the Crimes Act. I refuse to credit the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. I do not mean to say that I believe the right hon. and learned Gentleman has heard about the case, but I think I know who has heard about it. I think Mr. Peter O'Brien, the Solicitor General for Ireland, whose name is so heartily detested by every right thinking man in that country, knows something about the matter. I believe that Mr. Peter O'Brien has refrained from giving the right hon. and learned Gentleman any information upon the subject, because he knew that the question would be raised in this House, and he desired the right hon. and learned Gentleman to be in a comfortable state of ignorance, and unable to answer Questions put to him in this House. So far as my limited knowledge of Criminal Law is concerned, especially of the working of the Crimes Acts, I believe that the information the right hon. and learned Gentleman has conveyed, whether unwillingly or not, is erroneous. He led the Committee to believe that there was a prosecution, or that there may be a prosecution instituted by private individuals under the Crimes Act uninstructed by the Government. Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman be kind enough to inform me of any case of this kind where a private individual has initiated a prosecution without the aid of the Crown Lawyers? I believe the right hon. and learned Gentleman's statement is entirely at variance with the facts, and entirely at variance with the administration of the Criminal Law, so far as these exceptional measures are concerned. This prosecution must of necessity have been initiated by the police or by the Authorities at Dublin Castle; and that being so, it is impossible for the right hon. and learned Gentleman to get up in this House and persuade us that we are not entitled to discuss the question until we are in a position to name the prosecutors in the case. We all know who the prosecutor is, though we have not had his name mentioned to-night. The Sub-Inspector in charge of the police at Tang, no doubt, is prosecuting under the direction of the Solicitor General (Mr. Peter O'Brien).

MR. GIBSON: The hon. Member's statement is entirely incorrect. He owes the statement entirely to his own imagination.

MR. DEASY: Which statement?

MR. GIBSON: The statement that these prosecutions are being conducted with the knowledge of the Solicitor General for Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How do you know they are not?

MR. DEASY: Here, then, is a new light thrown on this subject. Until now we thought that Mr. Peter O'Brien was consulted in this case; but now we are asked to give credence to the extraordinary statement that the Solicitor General in Dublin Castle is doing nothing but receiving his large salary from this House, and is not consulted by Local Authorities with reference to important prosecutions under the Crimes Act. I leave that statement to the Committee—I leave the Committee to form its own opinion upon it. I ask them this one question—whether, if assertions of that kind had been made during the passage of the Crimes Act through this House, the House would have been so ready to place the administration of that drastic Act in the hands of local policemen; because that is what the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman amounts to. It amounts to this—that the Executive Authority in Dublin is not consulted by the Local Authorities as to the prosecutions entered upon under the Crimes Act. We Irish Members were all under the impression, and I believe English Members were under the impression as well, that nothing of consequence would be done under that Act without consultation with the highest Legal Authorities in Ireland. We were under the impression that the Government would control all these matters; and I do not think it possible that the number of Gentlemen who voted for the passing of this Act, having regard to the character of the police and the magistrates of Ireland, would have sanctioned the principle of allowing these people to initiate prosecutions without consulting the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, or the Solicitor General, who acts under him. I do not believe it possible. I believe this House acted under a misapprehension in passing the Crimes Act, and I was never more convinced of it than at this moment. I do not think anyone would have dared to make the statement which the right hon. and learned Gentleman has made to-night when the Crimes Act was under discussion in this House — I mean the statement that District Inspector Davis could initiate a prosecution under this Act without the knowledge of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. It seems to me that the deliberate policy of the Police Authorities under the control of the Irish Executive who are responsible to the right hon. and learned Gentleman is to bring about disturbance. Their action, I believe, has been dictated by a desire and a wish to stir up ill-feeling in County Westmeath, and to turn that county from a peaceable and orderly condition into such a condition as it was in 15 or 16 years ago, when it was found necessary to pass several Coercion Acts for it in order to keep the people within the law. Never has the county been in a more orderly, quiet, and peaceable state than it is at this moment. No crimes have occurred there; nothing in the nature of intimidation or Boycotting worth mentioning has occurred there; evictions have been carried out without disturbance, and everything has gone on smoothly and peaceably. But now we have a District Inspector, or one of his constables, initiating a prosecution against a body of respectable men with the deliberate object of driving the county into a state of disorder. I shall have a word or two to say directly in regard to another matter; but, before I sit down, I would demand, on the part of my hon. Friends, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman will be prepared to make a statement on this question on Report of the Vote, when it comes to be taken on Monday night. He has given as an excuse for not doing anything of the sort now, that it may, perhaps, militate against the prisoners or the accused. We have had a declaration on behalf of those gentlemen that they are not afraid of anything that may take place on Wednesday next. They are ready to take the risk of any announcement that the right hon. and learned Gentleman may make in this House. The excuse of the right hon. and learned Gentleman makes is one that we are thoroughly sick of. I have heard excuses of this kind put forward time after time during the last three or four years. Their object is to shield the officials in Ireland. They are put forward in order to save members of the Executive from the inconvenience of making statements that would reflect upon the conduct of the Government with which they are connected. So far as I am concerned, I do not attach the slightest importance to the scruples of the right hon. and learned Gentleman. I think they are scruples which are entirely baseless, for surely when hon. Members connected with the county, and when one hon. Gentleman who is a brother of one of the persons prosecuted has consented to come forward and to say that they are willing, on the part of those accused, to take any responsibility which might attach to a declaration of the policy of the Government in this matter on Monday next, I cannot see that the Government have the slightest excuse for not giving us that explanation, and all the information we require. If we do not get some reply on this point from the right hon. and learned Gentleman, I think it will be necessary for us to move the postponement of the Vote, or to move that Progress be reported. I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he will give us some assurance on the points which have been raised by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast?

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): We are always ready to believe the statements of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, and when he told us that he could read very quickly with his fingers we accepted that statement very readily. I think on the present occasion, however, that he has been very badly served by the telegraph clerks. I see that he has something that appears very much like a telegram in his hand at this moment—probably it is a telegram bearing upon this matter.

MR. GIBSON: It is. It was put into my hands while the hon. Member for West Mayo (Mr. Deasy) was speaking. It states that the summonses have been served for riot and obstructing the police. The cases will be heard at the Glasson Petty Sessions on the 17th instant, and the proceedings have been initiated with the concurrence of the Divisional Magistrates.

MR. SEXTON: The interruption of the right hon. and learned Gentleman leaves this case in a very singular position. He stated that he was ignorant of the circumstances of the cases. We can excuse him for that. He is removed from Dublin Castle, and has been for some time. We all admit that his attention has been largely taken up by affairs of great importance in this House, so that we can quite understand his ignorance. But he told us that the Solicitor General was also ignorant of what was going on in connection with these prosecutions. He knows nothing about the matter himself, and the Solicitor General for Ireland knows nothing about it. Surely this is very extraordinary. The telegram he has just read shows that the matters out of which this prosecution arises occurred on the 17th ultimo—that is 16 days ago—at Mullingar, only a short distance from the seat of government in Ireland. A new Coercion Act has been passed; a Sheriff proceeds to evict a number of persons 50 miles from Dublin; a disturbance arises, and prosecutions are initiated; and actually 16 days afterwards we are told that the Law Officers of the Crown, whose enormous salaries were discussed here in the earlier part of the evening, are ignorant of the circumstances under which the prosecutions arise, and have not made up their minds whether the policy of the prosecutions is such as they can approve of. That, Sir, seems to me an exhibition of administrative incapacity, or negligence, which would disgrace the Government of China. If I knew any other phrase more wedded to the situation than administrative incapacity I would substitute that phrase. The right hon. and learned Gentleman endeavoured to induce the Committee to abandon the discussion on this question, on the plea that this might not be a prosecution, but that some private person might have been so anxious to vindicate the law as to proceed against these 27 persons on his own responsibility.

MR. GIBSON: I said nothing of the sort. What I said was that I knew nothing of the facts; but that, for all we knew, the prosecutions might have been initiated by private persons.

MR. SEXTON: The right hon. and learned Gentleman might just as well suggest that the prosecutions were initiated by an Archangel as, in a case of this kind, that they might have been initiated by a private individual. Who ever heard of the like? There was a Crimes Act in force between the 12th of June, 1882, and the 14th of August, 1885. A great many men were prosecuted during that time—a great many went to gaol, and some to the gallows. But does the right hon. and learned Gentleman know any persons being prosecuted by private individuals under that Act?

Mr. GIBSON: No.

Mr. SEXTON: Then, let him hold his peace.

Mr. GIBSON: The hon. Member must permit me to claim to know something about these matters. Without referring to the Act of 1882, I would remind the hon. Member that Sub-Inspector Milling was prosecuted privately by the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner). Then, again, Lord Milltown's prosecution was a private affair. The hon. Member must know perfectly well that prosecutions can be initiated by private individuals.

Mr. SEXTON: The right hon. and learned Gentleman's argument would lose nothing if the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself endeavoured to be a little more calm. I was making no reflection upon the fullness of his knowledge. I am perfectly sensible of the amount of his information on these subjects. All I would ask is that he should share that knowledge with us. The right hon. and learned Gentleman is asked to cite a case where a prosecution occurred, under the Crimes Act, initiated by a private person, and he has not done so yet. He mentions Sub-Inspector Milling's case; but I would remind him that the prosecution, in that instance, was under the ordinary law. I understand also that Lord Milltown's case was under the ordinary law?

Mr. GIBSON: No; it was under the Crimes Act.

Mr. SEXTON: Then, it was a solitary case; and the other case referred to by the right hon. and learned Gentleman was under the ordinary law. Our contention is that private prosecutions are not initiated under Coercion Law in Ireland. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman expected any of us to believe that in a case where a landlord has got possession of his land, where the Sheriff has executed his functions, where the bailiffs have got their fees, and where the process of the law has been fully and completely effected, that it is necessary to institute a prosecution against 27 persons for the mere purpose of vindicating the law in Ireland, he asks us to accept a thing which common sense at once rejects. The suggestion he made a little time ago, that this prosecution might have been a private one, was a suggestion which was not worthy of his ingenuity. I would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether, on this occasion, he, in conjunction with the Solicitor General for Ireland, will examine into the details of this case, and elect to proceed upon one or other of the summonses issued against these defendants?

Mr. GIBSON: I would point out that these are alternative summonses, enabling the proceedings to be taken under one charge should the evidence in the other one prove insufficient.

Mr. SEXTON: I ask that the right hon. and learned Gentleman or the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland will be good enough to look over the evidence, and to make up their minds upon which summons they should proceed. Surely that is not too great an exaction to place on the intelligence and patience of the right hon. and learned Gentleman and his Colleague. The magistrates may be found perfectly willing to find these defendants guilty twice over for the same proceeding. We wish to avoid the possibility of any such occurrence. We ask that the charge shall only be one, and that if these gentlemen are punished it shall only be for one offence. We ask, therefore, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman will decide which of the summonses shall form the subject of the prosecution, because if the Divisional Magistrates at the head of the local hierarchy are called upon to try these persons under the two summonses they may find them guilty under each, and sentence them to imprisonment for two offences, and send them to gaol for two short periods which, if put together, would exceed the period of imprisonment that, if given in one sentence, would entitle the accused to an appeal. The cases are down to be heard on Wednesday next. Well, Sir, we will raise this matter on the Report of the present Vote; and I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman to make the most of the interval between now and the Report stage, and to obtain information on this subject. I ask him to give some consideration to the point I have just raised.

MR. TUITE: I must press, on behalf of my constituents and of the electors in my Colleague's Division, for an answer to the statement of the hon. Member for West Belfast. It is now evident that the apprehensions that the Irish Party expressed in this House during the discussions on the Crimes Bill were amply justified. I submit that the course which is about to be taken of proceeding against persons on two separate charges in order to obtain two separate sentences for what is practically one offence is a proceeding in the last degree contemptible. It is a mean and contemptible dodge, and unless I get a satisfactory reply from the right hon. and learned Gentleman I shall be constrained to move the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E—£2,000, Fees to Law Officers—be reduced by the sum of £1,000."—(*Mr. Tuite.*)

MR. DEASY: Before this is put, Sir, I would make one observation. Surely the speeches which have come from these Benches deserve some sort of reply from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland. We do not wish to press this matter unduly; but it is of importance that we should have some expression of opinion by the right hon. and learned Gentleman as to his intentions on the Report stage of this Vote. At any rate, it will be our duty to see that the matter is further discussed. The two points upon which we are most anxious to have information are these—whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman will, if he is unable to thoroughly investigate the matter before next Wednesday, postpone the prosecutions until some later date; and, secondly, we desire to know whether he will be able to say that the authorities who have charge of the prosecutions will proceed on one summons only or on two? These double summonses are evidently a dodge on the part of the police to get the men they are proceeding against committed to prison for a term of six or seven weeks without the chance of an appeal. Now, Sir, if we have an undertaking from the Government that they will proceed upon one charge only instead of two, my hon. Friend will withdraw his opposition to the Vote. All we want is fair play. We feel that it is not the intention of the Resident Magistrates, whoever they may be, who will have to hear these cases to grant fair play to these accused persons; and we submit that it is essential, particularly at the commencement of the application of such an Act as the Crimes Act, for the right hon. and learned Gentleman to see that everything is done legally, and that nothing is done which will militate against the liberties of the country. There appears to me to be a conspiracy between the Resident Magistrates and the Police Authorities to drive the people of Westmeath from peaceful agitation to a course of action which can only culminate in bloodshed and disorder. It is all very well to disregard the advice of the Irish Members; but surely it is to our interest, as well as it is to the interest of everyone living in Ireland, that peace should be maintained in the country. We have no desire to bring the people into collision with the powers that be. We know very well that if a collision should unfortunately take place, owing to that difference in the conditions of the contending parties, the people would come off second best. We do not want to see that. We wish to have the country in as peaceable and quiet a state as possible. We ask the Government for their motive in bringing forward this prosecution, and we also ask them on what the prosecution is based. The difference between this prosecution and that of the hon. Member for North-East Cork (Mr. William O'Brien) is well known. We have heard the grounds upon which proceedings are to be taken against him stated repeatedly here and in the newspapers; but we are not told the facts in the present case. Parliament, in a few days, will cease to exist till next year, and we shall have no further control over the action of the Executive. I say this case is an important one, on account of the number of men who are to be prosecuted, and for the reason that Mr. Hayden, one of the defendants, is a prominent Nationalist in Westmeath, and the proprietor of a newspaper, against which I believe the prosecution is levelled far more than against the other 26 men.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the first point of the hon. Member, it is perfectly true that the present arrangement with regard to the salaries of the Resident Magistrates is not wholly satisfactory. Having regard to the duties they perform in controlling the police in certain districts, it would, in the opinion of the Government, be more convenient and proper that the salaries of the Resident Magistrates should appear in the Police Vote rather than this Vote. The Treasury have brought in a Bill for the purpose; but an opportunity has not yet been afforded to the Government or the House for carrying though that legislation. With regard to the second question of the hon. Gentleman, I am entirely in accordance with the view that when anyone is brought up under the Crimes Act it is highly inconvenient and improper that there should not be two Resident Magistrates present, and I will do all I can to carry out that view.

Mr. DEASY: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland inquire into the case which has just now been stated? We do not want any unreasonable statement. We are perfectly willing to await the result of further inquiries; but we shall feel it our duty to press for an answer as far as we reasonably can.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): I am bound to say very respectfully that the demand made from the Benches opposite cannot be regarded as reasonable. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland is asked to say that only one charge shall be proceeded with. Any tyro must know that two, three, or more offences might have been committed, and it is only possible to know the charges that will be proceeded with after the evidence is given. I do not think hon. Members opposite can for one moment be serious in the request they have made in this respect. Then the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland is asked to undertake that some steps shall be taken in order to see that not more than one sentence is given; but it is impossible that that pledge can be given, because it might be proved that some of the persons charged have been guilty of two separate and distinct offences under the Act. There is no ground whatever for saying that the charge has been made from any improper motive, and I trust the hon. Gentleman will see that the demands made are unreasonable.

Colonel NOLAN: I think it is rather a mistake to move the reduction of this Vote for the Attorney General for Ireland. I do not see how the right hon. and learned Gentleman is responsible, and I am sorry that he has been brought into the discussion. Although the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) is one of the strongest lawyers at the English Bar, I do not think he is quite right in saying that two or three charges should be preferred, and that the punishment should be awarded so as to entitle the accused to appeal. In the first place, that would not be fair; and, in the second place, I want to put it to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) to consider how unreasonable and how cruel this would be. This is, practically, the first case brought under the new Coercion Act. I believe there is no one who alleges violence in this case, and I think the persons brought up should only get a nominal penalty, and be allowed out on their own recognizances. If the Government are pressing for a conviction I think they ought to be satisfied with simply giving a warning, and not pressing for further punishment; but instead of that the authorities in Westmeath seem to have a mind to endeavour to pile up punishments without appeal to the Superior Court. It may be the policy of Her Majesty's Government to intend to strike terror into the people of Ireland; but I do not think that policy will succeed. I point out that it would be a very invidious task to try to pile up the punishments without appeal in a case which is practically a test case. I think the Government ought to proceed in the first case in a most gentle manner, so as to show the people what their powers are. I repeat my regret that this Motion has been made for the reduction of the salary of the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland, because it his duty to proceed in this matter; at the same time, I think we ought to get an assurance from the Leader of the House that there is no wish to pile up two or three sentences of a month each, so as to protect themselves from the power of appeal which they specially pointed to during the passing of the Act as a very great security.

Mr. P. J. POWER (Waterford, E.): When the Act was passing through the Committee we were told that no such abuses as we are now contending against could take place. The Act has not been long in existence, and I think we have now before us an instance of the many abuses that will take place under it. We find a most important prosecution instituted without even the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland or his Colleague, the famous Mr. Peter O'Brien, knowing anything about it. That, we know, confirms the opinion that the magistrates in Ireland are our political opponents, and more anxious to punish us than anything else. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has confessed to us that he knows nothing of this case, and the Solicitor General for Ireland has confessed the same. We ask him to postpone the trial to a certain date, in order that he may make himself conversant with the facts. If you want to make law and order respected in Ireland, the first thing you have to do is to make it worthy of respect. The Stipendiary Magistrate, if he is to have before him two or three charges connected with the same transaction, will, in all probability, inflict three punishments, one for each charge, and thereby deprive the accused of the right of appeal. Let the Government recollect that this is one of the first proceedings they are taking under the Act, which is a repulsive one in itself, even if administered in a fair spirit; but if they wish to drive the people of Ireland, as I believe they do, into a desperate spirit, they will pursue their present course.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must withdraw that expression.

MR. P. J. POWER: I withdraw the words "I believe they do."

MR. FLYNN: It will be in the recollection of the Committee that my hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) pleaded for this right of appeal, and that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) deliberately evaded the pledge given on that subject. Now, the question which my hon. Friend raised is the very one which will come on before the Resident Magistrates. But the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland ays it is easy to imagine a case in which there will be three or four different sorts of summonses arising out of acts done. That is so; but they will not be brought for the purpose of having different punishments awarded for what arises out of the same circumstances. Take the case of a trivial assault. Would it not be most unjust and unreasonable that, arising out of that one assault, there should be accumulative sentences passed, amounting to, say, nine weeks' hard labour for one offence? The effect of this would be that there would be no right of appeal. That point was pressed with very great force in this House, and also in correspondence in the public Press, in which, undoubtedly, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland came off second best. That right of appeal was contended for here, and the question was fought over with great pertinacity; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, as I have said, gave a distinct pledge that in these cases the right of appeal would lie. We now test the Government on the point. We showed clearly at the time that the ingenuity of Crown lawyers or District Inspectors would be exercised in such a manner that out of one circumstance three or four charges might be made, and a different sentence passed in connection with each charge, and that thus, if there were no right of appeal, a man would practically get nine or 10 weeks, or even more, without any appeal whatever. Under the Act, as it stands at present, any sentence for a month can be appealed against; but there is no appeal where the sentence is under a month. The great ability of the right hon. and learned Attorney General is recognized; but it is also well known that in powers of assertion there is no man in this Committee who can equal him.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must withdraw that expression.

MR. FLYNN: I only meant that in respect of assertion the hon. Gentleman was an adept of the highest order.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must withdraw the expression.

MR. FLYNN: I withdraw it, Sir. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) has stated to-night that several summonses may be brought against the same defendants arising out of the same set of circumstances. But does the hon. and learned Gentleman not see that this is the case for which we are contending? We say that this danger exists at the present moment, and that these men will be punished with a long and severe sentence simply because the right of appeal is evaded. Does not the hon. and learned Gentleman see the point? Does not the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland see it? We must press this point upon the Committee; it is a most important one. We are now under the operation of the most drastic Crimes Act that ever stained the Statute Book of this country. The Session is now drawing to a close, and if these things are done before Parliament is prorogued, who can tell to what extent injustice and tyranny may go on in Ireland during the Recess? We press for an answer on this point, and we shall certainly press the Committee to consider the reduction of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's salary, unless we receive a satisfactory assurance that accumulated sentences will not be passed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman must well recollect the circumstance to which I refer—namely, when my hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork pleaded in this House for hours for the right of appeal under this Coercion Act. My hon. Friend the Member for Cork, I can say with all justice, is inferior to no lawyer in this House in reading the Statutes, and in the power of expressing the meaning of any Statute which comes before him. He pointed out the effect of the Bill as it then stood, and a most explicit pledge was given that there would be the right of appeal given to all men coming before the Resident Magistrates. It was acknowledged by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and, if I mistake not, it was acknowledged by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, that the right of appeal should be given; and I say that if the Government maintain their present attitude, and we cannot obtain any redress, a distinct breach of faith has been committed.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I wish to make an appeal to you, Sir, and to the Committee. We have been discussing for some hours pending proceedings in a Court of Justice; and I venture to say that it has always been held in this House that it is not fitting, and that it is not decent—[*Cries of* "Hear, hear!"]—for Parliament to discuss proceedings which are pending, and the discussion of which must influence the decision of the Court one way or the other. I do not know whether there remains in the Chair any authority, any power, or any discretion which can limit discussion in this House when the credit of this House as a Parliamentary institution is at stake. When that which constitutes one of the great powers of the State is at stake, and when, Sir, interests of the greatest moment and concern to the population of the United Kingdom are imperilled by the course which hon. Gentlemen think it their duty to take, I appeal to you, Sir, to say whether the time has not come when a discussion of this character should end, and whether we should not proceed to the decision of a question which has been more than adequately debated?

THE CHAIRMAN: I regret very much the position in which the Committee finds itself. I made an appeal to the hon. Member for North Westmeath (Mr. Tuite) almost as soon as the first proceedings began. I said it would be extremely inconvenient to strain the powers of the Committee to such a perilous extent that they might almost be taken away. The hon. Member did not comply with that appeal, and I have now no power to stop the proceedings of the Committee.

MR. TUITE: I am not at all surprised at the right hon. Gentleman saying that we have been for hours debating this question, because he has not been in the House, and therefore does not know how long we have been discussing it. I have no doubt that if the right hon. Gentleman had had 200 of his followers present he would have applied the closure. We commenced the discussion at half-past 9 o'clock. The question is one which concerns my constituents, and I intend to press the Amendment to a Division, and, if necessary, to move to report Progress. This question concerns the liberty of the subject in Ireland. I say you are outraging the powers given to you by Parliament; you are abusing those powers by placing them in the hands of irresponsible individuals in Ireland; and you have not heard the last of this question to-night, or the last of it this Session, which, when the Report comes up, you will understand, for you will have to get your 200 back to London.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury has treated us to one of those sermons which have earned for him a soubriquet. [*Cries of* "Order!"] It is all very well for a Government which is shocking public feeling in Ireland to appeal to Members on this side of the House; but their appeals will fall on our heads as dead as our appeals have fallen upon them. We have a duty to perform; we have to rouse the attention of the country to the atrocious tyranny which is now being inflicted on the people of Ireland; and no appeal from the right hon. Gentleman will influence us one jot in the course which we feel it our duty to pursue. It is unfortunate for the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues that they have begun the application of this most drastic measure so early. If they had postponed their operations a little longer the House might have risen, and the Government might have had full swing, and been free from that control which, fortunately, we are able to put upon them. We know now what is the value of the pledges given, because we on these Benches have had full experience of them. Their contemptible conduct in repressing public meeting——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must withdraw the expression "contemptible conduct."

MR. CONYBEARE: I withdraw the word "contemptible," and say that their conduct shows how far we may rely on the pledges of the Ministers of the Crown. I rejoice to think that the opportunity has arisen this evening of discussing the position of affairs in Ireland at the present moment. It is all very well to talk to us about the discussions in this House affecting the proceedings of the Court. It is an idle technicality, if you will, by which we shall not be deterred for one moment. It is all very well to talk about our discussions affecting those who have these matters in hand, who are mere myrmidons of illegality——

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I rise to Order, Sir. Is it in Order to call the magistrates in Ireland the "myrmidons of illegality?"

THE CHAIRMAN: The language of the hon. Member is most incorrect in fact, and incorrect in terms, as applied to those who have the administration of the law in Ireland, and those who have the conduct of affairs in this House.

MR. CONYBEARE: I shall be most happy to withdraw the word "myrmidon;" and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that there was not the slightest desire on my part to wound his sensibility. But in whatever light we may regard the Officers of the Law in Ireland, we do not feel in them that confidence which we all happily possess in the case of the Judges of this country. The argument I was using, and what I wanted to express, was that, not having that confidence, we feel it our duty to impress on the nation the necessity of keeping a close watch on the action of the Government with reference to legal proceedings in Ireland which have already commenced. The proceedings of the Government at the present time are precisely the same as the actions of those who ruled—or, rather, misruled—Ireland in the early part of the century. I am not going to refer to what happened in those dark days; but I say it is absolutely necessary for every man in this country to wake up to the fearful results which may spring from the action of Her Majesty's Government in Ireland at the present moment. They are suppressing the right of public meetings and free speech, and there is practically no liberty left in Ireland. I only hope we shall be able to impress on the people of the country what it is the Government are doing in Ireland; and as we can only express our views and feelings on the floor of this House we shall use every moment for the purpose, unless the Government give us satisfaction on the matter which has been brought forward. This is the Supreme Court of Appeal in this country. Although there may be a packed jury empannelled at the present time, still we are able to raise our voices here, and are able to make our voices heard throughout the country.

MR. SEXTON: I must earnestly protest against the speech which has been delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House. He cannot evade the responsibility which lies upon him, and that responsibility is to acquaint himself with the facts of the case before he presumes to address the Committee in the tone he has just adopted. Sir, before he appealed for the application of the power of the Chair to the suppression of the liberties of Members, the right hon. Gentleman has, in a great measure, misrepresented the time that we have been employed upon this Vote, and he has misrepresented our motives and our purposes. He said we had been engaged for hours in the discussion of the question before the Committee. Now, as a matter of fact, we have only been discussing this question for an hour and a-quarter; and considering that the liberties of 86 Irishmen about to be impeached before an irresponsible Court of Summary Jurisdiction are at stake, I think it will be admitted by everyone of impartial mind that the time occupied in discussing this question has not been excessive. The right hon. Gentleman's second allegation was that we have endeavoured to push this question on the Committee with the view of affecting the decision of a Court of Justice. I give that allegation the strongest contradiction. We have no such object, and no such purpose appears from the debate. We do not desire, or hope, or intend to affect the decision of the Court upon this question. What we desire is, that the responsibility of the Government should be exercised. Does the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury know anything about the case; does he know that in regard to the policy of a prosecution arising out of an occurrence which happened 16 days ago the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) has confessed his entire ignorance? Does he know that the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland has said the Solicitor General for Ireland is also ignorant of the matter? Does he know that the Sheriff of the county, having driven across the county without escort, accomplished the evictions easily, and yet that out of that occurrence so peaceably ended the police authorities have got up two charges? Anyone found guilty before a Court of Summary Jurisdiction under the 2nd section of the Crimes Act may be sent to prison for six months with hard labour. Did the House intend when it passed the Crimes Act that if a person was convicted of obstructing the officers of the law in the course of evictions he should also be proceeded against on a charge of riot? That is what has been done in Westmeath and in Mullingar. The gravity of the case is that this is a test case. Under the new Crimes Act men are to be proceeded against for obstruction and then for riot. If the magistrates inflict the maximum penalty they may send the prisoners to gaol for 12 months, six months upon each charge. This is an affair of the utmost gravity. Are you going to allow the police acting under the new Coercion Act to fabulate accumulative charges arising out of the same transaction, and to pile up sentences against men? We are bound to face this at the outset; and none of the threats which are so familiar in the mouth of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury will prevent us when this House assembles again saying all we can in resistance to a policy which destroys public liberty, and is so provocative of those passions which lead to opposition and crime. Now, let us suppose that the Court sentences these men to 27 days' imprisonment each upon each charge; that will be 54 days' imprisonment with hard labour; and by that simple process the prisoner will be robbed of the right of appeal. Now, Sir, does the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury mean to contend that this is a case not worthy of attention; does he say that we are not justified in bringing it forward; does he say that the Members for Westmeath would deserve to be re-elected for that county if they had been silent on this occasion; does he think that the Members for Westmeath would not have had fair ground of complaint against us if we, the general body of Irish Members, had been silent on this occasion? Am I going beyond my right in complaining that the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland has allowed 16 days to elapse without making himself acquainted with the facts of this case? I appeal to the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether it is desirable to manufacture two charges out of one transaction? He has the power of option if he has the will; let it be obstruction or rioting, let it be rioting or obstruction, let us have one charge or the other. At any rate, let us have some assurance, on the one hand, that the magistrates cannot inflict 12 months' imprisonment, and, on the other hand, that they cannot, by inflicting a low sentence in each case, evade the ordinary right of appeal. We have an undoubted right to press this matter, and certainly we shall not be deterred by anything we have heard from the First Lord of the Treasury, whose speech I cannot for a moment consider at all likely to facilitate the transaction of Business.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 49; Noes 116: Majority 67.—(Div. List, No. 441.) [11.5 P.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

MR. TUITE: I wish to give timely notice to the Government that when the Report upon this Vote is brought on I shall expect to receive definite information from the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson), as to whether the Government will proceed on the double charge against Mr. Hayden and his friends. If I do not receive such information I shall certainly protract the discussion upon the Report stage as much as I possibly can.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I should like to ask the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland whether he will take steps to prevent many Crimes Act cases being sent to the Assizes? I know there have been cases which in the judgment of many ought never to have been brought before Assizes. There is a common practice in the county of Kerry to send cases to the Assizes, and the accused experience a great deal of difficulty in bringing up their witnesses. That is a matter which the right hon. and learned Gentleman would do well to pay some attention to. There are many cases which could be very well disposed of at Quarter Sessions. There are too many prosecutions which may be dealt with under the ordinary law instead of under the Crimes Act. I do not wish to cause any irritation; but I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, in the first place, that he will personally assume official responsibility whenever questions involving prosecutions arise; and, secondly, that as far as possible he will, through those connected with the administration of the law, discourage the practice of bringing too many of these Crimes Act cases. Let me mention a case which occurred under the last Crimes Act. An old man, 75 years of age, went to a land agent and paid his rent, and then returned to his house. The police had not received notice of what he had done, but brought him up and charged him with taking forcible possession. I saw that old man, who had never been accused of crime, suffering a month's imprisonment under the Crimes Act. I also saw children of between nine and 12 years of age sent into prison because they had used what were considered insulting names to the children of land-grabbers and other persons in their locality. It is a shame, and a disgrace, that these things should be. I know they occurred under a former Administration; but it must be remembered that the officials in Ireland never change with the Administration. The officials carry out the policy of Dublin Castle. I ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) if the Administration may not be improved by his giving such directions as I suggest? I have also seen young girls, daughters of farmers, cast into prison under the Crimes Act, because they rescued cattle—[*Cries of* "Name!"] —I certainly could give the names; but I do not know what good purpose would be served by doing so. The people are acquaintances of mine; they are people whose troubles I have had personal knowledge of; and they are people whose interests I delight to protect as much as I can. I do not say that these things are specially connected with the present Administration; but I think that we may fairly make an appeal in advance to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland that he will give directions to the police officers in Ireland that they are not to use the Crimes Act in a needless and useless way, and simply for the purpose of irritation. Of course, if it is so used, it will be our duty to bring these matters before the House. It is quite possible that many Irish Members will have personal grievances of their own; but there is every probability that some of us at least will be left at liberty to tell the story of how we fought and how we fell, If the right hon. and learned Attorney General will avail himself of the advice I tender him he will do much to allay irritation, and in this way lighten the labours of the House of Commons in the coming Session.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I am constrained, very much against my will, to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland has not taken any notice whatever of a matter which was brought to the notice of the Committee a short time ago by my hon. Friend the Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn). We have had many interesting speeches from the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland to-night. They were plausible speeches indeed. He endeavoured to meet the arguments and cases brought to his notice in a fair and reasonable fashion. In one of his speeches he said he would take good care to preserve his character. He has done his best in that direction to-night; but I wish he had given us some satisfaction regarding the proceedings of Inspector Milling, of Cork. Inspector Milling and those under his charge committed a gross outrage on the people of the City of Cork. The right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland of that day is now Mr. Justice Holmes, and he advised the Government to enter a *nolle prosequi* in the matter. Inspector Milling was returned for trial by the Bench of Magistrates of Cork. We want to know, very reasonably as I think, why Inspector Milling was not prosecuted. I was not present when my hon. Friend (Mr. Flynn) spoke; but perhaps he did not explain sufficiently why the meeting at Cork was held, and the circumstances under which it was broken up. I trust I shall be in Order if I endeavour to enlighten the Committee as to the circumstances under which the meeting was dispersed. Now, trial by jury is a precious gem of the British Constitution. The citizens of Cork met last December for the purpose of asking that trial by jury should get fair play in Ireland. Trial by jury had not received fair play in that country. Juries were packed in Ireland——

The CHAIRMAN: The subject with which the hon. Gentleman is dealing was raised on the items which included the salary of the Attorney General for Ireland and the Crown Solicitors. Both those items have now been passed by, therefore the hon. Gentleman cannot recur to them. I see no other item in connection with which the matter can be again raised.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: I thought we were on the original Vote. Inspector Milling committed a gross outrage on the liberties of the people, and we desire to know why he was not prosecuted.

The CHAIRMAN: We are on the Main Question; but an Amendment has been moved to Item E and voted upon. It is, therefore, no longer competent to discuss anything connected with the previous items. The Attorney General's salary is provided for under Item A, and the salaries of the Crown Solicitors are provided for under Items B and C.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: Under Sub-head H provision is made for the expenses incurred by Resident Magistrates and Constabulary in the execution of their duty; and under this Sub-head I respectfully submit it is competent for me to call attention to the conduct of Inspector Milling at Cork, and of all those who acted under his orders when, armed with bâtons and sword bayonets, they scattered a meeting of citizens.

The CHAIRMAN: No; it is not competent to question the conduct of the police under this Vote at all. The question that was raised was the question of prosecutions.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to remind my hon. Friend the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. J. O'Connor) that upon the Report stage he will have an opportunity of recurring to this question. Such being the case, and that he may obey your ruling, Sir, I advise my hon. Friend not to press the subject at the present moment.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: In accordance with your ruling, Sir, I shall forego my intention of raising the question now; but unless the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland does, in the meantime, give us some satisfaction in this matter, I shall bring the question forward on Report.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) £47,387, to complete the sum for the Supreme Court of Judicature in Ireland.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Even the most cursory glance at this Vote will show that the same vice runs through all Irish administration.

Here are the same bloated sums. I know that the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) regards this as a very good joke; but it is a better joke for the official than for the unhappy taxpayer. I maintain that if you compare this Vote with the corresponding Vote for England, you will find a vast disproportion between this amount and the duties involved under it, and the amount of the English Vote and the duties involved under that. Now, Sir, just let me point out to the Committee the number of persons under the Vote who have salaries of £1,000 a-year. In the first place, the Chief Clerk in the Lord Chancellor's Office has £1,000, the Chief Clerk in the Office of the Master of the Rolls has £1,000 a-year, the Chief Clerk in the Vice Chancellor's Office has £1,000; then there is the First Assistant Registrar in the Registrar's Office of the Vice Chancellor's Department, who has £1,000 a-year; then the Registrar of the Land Division Court has the same salary. The Master of the Queen's Bench has £1,200, and so on. I could enumerate many more such instances. Now, the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland found fault with me some time ago when I said that the highest income obtained at the Irish Bar was £1,500 a-year. He found fault with me, and said that there were many instances to the contrary. He found fault with me on account of another statement I made —namely, that every barrister who got a seat on the Bench in Ireland improved his income by so doing. Well, I listened very attentively to the right hon. and learned Gentleman when he came to reply to me; but I found that he was discreetly silent on the matter, and did not cite cases to disprove my allegation. He satisfied himself with vague generalities which learned lawyers like himself always seek refuge in when they have no facts to back up their position. There is not a single one of these persons whose names I have mentioned as receiving £1,000 who would not originally have been delighted to accept his office at £500 a-year. The whole system of these payments in Ireland is out of proportion to the resources of the country. What are these offices in the Courts of Law in Dublin? Why, they are merely opportunities of finding places and comfortable incomes for the relatives and dependents of high legal and political functionaries in Ireland. The late Sir Edward Sullivan, who was Lord Chancellor when he died, was Master of the Rolls in Ireland for many years, and there was a common saying about the Courts—I do not know whether I correctly quote it or not—but it was said that the Office of the Master of the Rolls ought to be known as the Mallow Division of the High Court of Judicature. The origin of that was that Sir Edward Sullivan came from Mallow, and as a result almost every man—and I am not sure, if female suffrage had been in existence at that time, that I might not have been able to say every woman in Mallow as well—got something out of the Department of the Master of the Rolls. There was hardly anyone who had to do with Mallow who did not find a snug place under Sir Edward Sullivan in secretaryships, clerkships, and in the offices of train-bearer, crier, and so on. I venture to say that all the business in the Offices of the Master of the Rolls in Ireland could be done by at most a quarter of the number of officials at present employed there. If the staff were reduced to one-fourth, even then it would be able to do its work efficiently if the salaries received by the *employés* were reduced by one half. The Judges in Ireland are idle during half the year, and during that half of the year that they are at work are only engaged in their professional duties half the time. If you go into a Court of Justice in England you find that the Judge sitting upon the Bench is one of the most hard-worked officials in the country. He has cases of enormous importance to decide almost every day of his life, and when he is relieved from his duties in the Courts in London he has to undertake very arduous duties at Assizes. It is an extraordinary fact that in England the Judges are so few in number for the work that has to be done that they are greatly over-worked, whilst in Ireland the Judges have scarcely anything to do. That is an extraordinary contradiction which no one but an official of the Government can explain. The fact of the matter is that the Judges in Ireland are the most idle and over-paid men in the whole world, and as it is at the top of the tree, so it descends through all the branches of the legal department. Look at this Vote for a poor country like Ireland—£87,387! Why, £20,000 would be amply sufficient for all that is done in Ireland——

Several hon. MEMBERS: Too much, too much!

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: £20,000 would be quite sufficient, looking at all the corruption that runs through every vein and artery of the system under the present practice. I know very well that my protest against this sort of thing will be all in vain. Every protest that we Irish Members utter in this House against extravagance is in vain. I conceive it, however, to be my duty, in season and out of season, to call attention to the extraordinary and shameless extravagance of the Irish Administration. I shall lose no opportunity of calling the attention of the taxpayers of this country to the extraordinary amount which it costs them to govern Ireland.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): My hon. Friend, in speaking of the gross extravagance which characterizes the judicial system in Ireland, has forgotten to mention the fact that this Vote by no means covers all the money expended upon that system. It does not correspond with the English Vote for this purpose, because the English Vote covers not only the ground covered by this Vote, but the ground which is covered by the two Irish Votes which follow, because the Court of Bankruptcy is included in the English Estimates and the Land Commission also—there is no parallel in England for the Irish Land Commission, which is an extra as compared with the English Vote. The Irish Land Commission costs as much as the whole of this Vote, so that if we included the whole cost of the judicial system in Ireland, we are face to face with the fact that that judicial system under which there is not one 25th, or one 30th, or perhaps even one 50th the amount of work done under the English system costs nearly £200,000 a-year, whilst the English system costs only some £400,000 a-year. That shows in the plainest manner the difference in the course of the administration of justice in these two countries — that shows in the plainest way the extravagance of the system as it exists in Ireland. And this is not the only comparison unfavourable to Ireland which may be made in this matter, because persons who practise at the Bar in Ireland in all cases where they stepped from the Bar to the Bench it was to their great financial profit; whereas in England, as a general rule, it is a great financial loss to a leading barrister to take a place upon the Bench, and the only inducement for such men to accept the position is the financial benefit they derive in their declining years. I must point out also, as a protest against the existing system in Ireland, the enormous personal salaries paid to almost all the clerks in the Four Courts. There is a foot note appended here to this effect—"This salary is personal to the present holder." Well, it appears to me that these salaries, personal to the present holder, are so general that there is no salary which does not appear to be personal to the present holder; and as personality is made a reason for granting an additional sum over and above that which ought to be allowed by the law to persons holding these offices the spirit of the Civil Service system is altogether evaded by the practice which prevails in Ireland. I think if I were to go through the whole figures composing the list of salaries personal to the present holders, I could show that this Vote is immoderately swollen, and swollen beyond the proper limits of the Civil Service requirements. I see in the three pages of particulars that we have here that there are a series of foot notes coming down as far as the letter H explaining the excesses on these salaries. Now, Sir, I know it is absolutely useless for us to apply to the Irish Attorney General or to the Irish Solicitor General or to the Irish lawyers in matters of this kind. I do not, therefore, appeal to those whose manifest interest it is to preserve the *status quo*. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, no doubt, being mixed up with the practice of the Four Courts, is anxious to maintain the flow of money which at the present time proceeds from the Exchequer of the United Kingdom into the Four Courts at its present somewhat excessive level. But I would appeal to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson), who is practically the guardian of the Public Purse when we are in Committee of Supply. He is the person who speaks for the Public Purse, and it is to him, and not to any Irish Law Officer, that I must address an appeal in order to induce him to set his Department at work for the purpose of cutting down this extravagant expenditure. It is not at all necessary to sacrifice the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury on the altar of economy, in order to secure a material reduction in this Vote. There is no suggestion that he ought to follow the course adopted by the late illustrious Chancellor of the Exchequer, the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), and sacrifice himself on the altar of economy. If he sets himself vigorously to work and overhauls all these excessive salaries and inquires into the excessive number of clerkships in the Four Courts he would see that there is an immense field open to him for economy. The amount that is expended—something like £87,000 a-year—in maintaining these clerks is simply an imposture on the taxpayers of this country; and if they could only understand this abuse, they would certainly pull down this expenditure to something like one-quarter of what it is. It is absolutely melancholy in one sense to go into the Four Courts in Dublin, because you go from Court to Court, and what do you see? Why, you see a lot of clerks there twiddling their thumbs and having nothing to do, and you look at the Judges and you find that they also have nothing to do. The fact is, there are Courts in Dublin which have something like three working days in the whole year. I think I am not far wrong when I say the amount of business to be done in the Four Courts in Ireland at the present time is almost *nil*. The only Department in which there seems to be any work going on at the present moment is the Land Court, where the eternal Land Question is being fought out. In almost all the other Courts there seems to be nothing whatever to do. I think it is high time that we should inquire into the extravagance of this amount. I believe that all the barristers in Ireland put together do not earn so much as is paid to these clerks. The fact that £87,000 is paid to the clerks in the Four Courts in Dublin really amounts to a financial scandal, and it seems to me to be certainly a thing which should be put an end to. I appeal to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, who has the cause of economy at heart, to consider whether something cannot be done with the object of breaking down this extravagant expenditure.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I have no hesitation in replying to the appeal of the hon. Gentleman opposite, and I can assure him that I have economy at heart just as much as he has, and that I shall be very glad if I can see any plan by which economy can be effected. He has referred to what certainly seems a very extraordinary condition of things on the face of the Estimates as to a very large number of offices in connection with these items of personal salaries. I believe the explanation of these items is that when an alteration in the organization took place a few years ago, the officers who were then in office, with the salaries which they then held, had certain rights of promotion, and, losing these advantages, personal salaries were given to them. These personal salaries will not be renewed as vacancies arise and other officers take the places of those employed. I am obliged to the hon. Member opposite for having called my attention to this matter in the way in which he has done, because before the Estimates come on again I can assure him I will look into the matter, and endeavour to effect something in the nature of economy.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: After the very satisfactory answer of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, I do not think it is necessary to address any further observations to the Committee on this matter.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £6,140, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Incidental Expenses of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland."

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I do not wish to detain the Committee by any lengthened remarks on this Vote. The whole Vote is a very large one, seeing that the Court does not do a very large amount of business. £10,140 is the whole sum, and, knowing the total amount of bankruptcy business done in Ireland, I certainly think the sum is a large one. As the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary to the Treasury

(Mr. Jackson) has promised to give his attention during the Recess to the Vote for judicial expenditure, I trust he will also give his attention to this very expensive Court of Bankruptcy. There is another reason for calling attention to the Vote, and it is one which, though I did not mention it at first, is, perhaps, the more important of the two. When the Court of Bankruptcy was originally instituted I presume it was instituted for the same reason that you have a Court of Bankruptcy in England, and everywhere else where there is fair dealing with cases of insolvency and commercial bankruptcy. It was never understood, I believe—it was never dreamt when the Court of Bankruptcy was originally established in Ireland—that it would be diverted into an institution for political persecution. I do not believe that Parliament would have sanctioned anything of that kind. Under Sub-head "C," for incidental expenditure, we have a sum of £94, being the item for the expenses of messengers in the Bankruptcy Office. What does this arise from? It arises in this way. Judge Monroe, who is one of the Judges mentioned here, is responsible for it. He has taken a fanatical view of his position. He thinks that because the large powers of the Court of Bankruptcy are vested in him, he has a perfect right, notwithstanding that his salary comes under the Vote of this Committee, to serve his political friends and partizans in the exercise of the powers of the Court. Well, now, Sir, in connection with the action of the Court of Bankruptcy in the case at Youghal, and in some other cases, the Court has gone to enormous expense, not in vindication of the commercial status of the country, not for the purpose of realizing the assets of an estate which comes before the Court, but has gone to expense entirely disproportionate to the gravity of the cause that came before it, in order that a certain line of political action which seemed right and proper to the Judge of the Court of Bankruptcy might be followed out. I am drawing attention to the large expense incurred by the action of Judge Boyd in connection with the famous Youghal case. The amount of the debt was inconsiderable, but the expense gone to under the direction of the Judge in bringing up an unfortunate man who was in defiance to Dublin, and for the sending of messengers around, and the obtaining of witnesses, including, amongst other things, the arrest of a priest at Youghal, amounted to a large sum. The action of this Judge had the effect of throwing the town of Youghal into disorder, in which, through the brutality of a policeman, an unfortunate young man met his death. The whole of this disorder was owing to the action of Judge Boyd, which action I am persuaded was never contemplated when these powers were vested in the County Court Judges. As I understand it, the Court of Bankruptcy was established for the purpose of dealing with insolvency, and for the purpose of dealing with fraudulent bankrupts when desirable in the interests of the commercial community, and in the interests of commercial morality and honesty, that an example should be made. There was no such object in the case I refer to. The Judge was perfectly well aware—as well aware as it could be possible for him to be—on the affidavits before him that the course he followed would cost an enormous amount of money. He was well aware of the death of the young man I have referred to, and from a very mistaken view, not of his powers, but as to the action he ought to take, and as to the way in which he should administer the Bankruptcy Law, put the taxpayers of the country to enormous expense, threw the country into turmoil and disorder, and all for what? That a parish priest who, no matter what the other circumstances involved are, was always looked up to as the very model of all that a Christian pastor ought to be, should be arrested. This reverend gentleman was arrested in his own house and taken to Kilmainham Prison, and there he lay in durance vile for several months. Was it ever contemplated by those who established the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland that its power should be used for this purpose? Of course, it is too late in the Session for hon. Members on these Benches to bring forward a measure dealing with the Court of Bankruptcy, and declaring that action of this kind shall not be taken under the direction of the Judges—declaring that only a legitimate use shall be made of the powers vested in the County Court Judges. The Judges ought not to have the authority of using those extraordinary powers for avowedly political objects. Of course, it is not competent for us, on these Estimates, to attack the conduct of a Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature, or any Judges of the Supreme Court in Ireland. But, as I see an item here of £2,000 in respect of the salary of one of these Judges, I presume it is competent for me to impugn their conduct. Judge Boyd had brought before him cases of bankruptcy in connection with the Ponsonby estate, at Youghal, and he has shown in connection with these cases an animus which is unjudicial.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question the hon. Gentleman is now dealing with has been considered more than once in this House, and more than once decided. It is not legitimate for criticism to take this form.

MR. FLYNN: I bow to your decision, Sir. I would merely call the attention of the Committee to the large amount of expense incurred under the item to which I have referred. I wish to bring before the notice of hon. Members the large amount expended in a manner never contemplated when the Bankruptcy Court was established.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour), in regard to this Vote, whether it is intended to proceed with the Bankruptcy Bill they brought in at an earlier period of the Session? Under the present system, bankruptcy in Ireland, no matter how limited, is adjudicated upon by one or other of two Judges in Dublin, which is injurious to the public interest. Bankruptcies in Ireland are usually of small amount, and the bulk of the assets are swallowed up by this costly adjudication in Dublin. The right hon. Gentleman some time ago said the Government would be glad to facilitate the introduction of a Bill by any private Member; but my experience has been very sad in that respect. I myself have given a great deal of time and attention to the subject—I have been before the Examiner and a Select Committee. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Serjeant Madden) was present upon the Select Committee, and moved several Amendments on behalf of the Treasury, which were unanimously accepted by the Committee, and the Bill has been unanimously reported with the Amendments inserted in it. The Bill is non-contentious, except so far that it has been blocked, and it is a Bill that is desired by all parties, and was approved by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in the early period of the Session. The Bill would establish local Courts in Belfast, and as it is particularly desired by the commercial classes, I would take this opportunity of making a strong appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary on behalf of this Bill, which really is a non-contentious one.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Gentleman asks me a question as to the views of the Government regarding the Bill he brought in at an earlier period of the Session. So far as I am personally concerned, I think that this, or some Bill on the same lines, ought certainly to be passed by this House; but, the Bill being blocked, it may not be possible to pass it. If it is not passed this Session, I hope early next year this, or a similar Bill, will be adopted by the House.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I think as the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary agrees with the principle of the Bill he has the power to pass it. It is true the Bill is blocked, but only by the hon. Baronet opposite the Member for Mid Armagh (Sir James Corry). I feel bound to call attention to this fact that another hon. Gentleman—the Member for North Belfast (Mr. Ewart)—was on the Committee which reported this Bill, and I believe the hon. Gentleman is quite in favour of the principle of the Bill. My hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) is making himself the mouthpiece of almost the unanimous demand of the commercial class of Belfast; and I therefore would appeal to the hon. Baronet to yield his opinion to that of the people of Belfast, the more especially as I understand the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is in favour of the principle of the Bill. Under these circumstances, I would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to use his influence with his followers, and I would appeal to them to relax their opposition. I understand it is also blocked by an English Conservative Member, the hon. Member for the Torquay Division of Devon (Mr. Mallock), and I think it is rather hard that a Gentleman representing Torquay should place himself in opposition to a Bill that relates to Belfast, and which is what all Belfast desires.

Mr. SEXTON: I see opposite the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Serjeant Madden), and I would appeal to him, as he was a Member of the Select Committee, to corroborate my statement that the Amendments moved by him on behalf of the Treasury were unanimously adopted. The hon. Member for North Belfast (Mr. Ewart) sat upon the Committee, and he was satisfied generally with the Bill; and I would invite the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Armagh (Sir James Corry), who blocked the Bill, to rise and give any reason for it, and to say whether there is any one commercial person, of any politics whatever, in Belfast, who would not wish the Bill to pass. The citizens of Belfast expect from him something in their interests, and therefore I ask why he has blocked the Bill, which would be a boon to the people of Belfast, and give them at their own door, and in their own city, a cheap administration of the Bankruptcy Law, which they have not now? That being the case, I think I have a right to appeal to the Government—and I think the hon. Gentleman should join with me so far as to remove his block—for facilities to proceed with the Bill, which is in the interests of the commercial community of Belfast.

Mr. Serjeant MADDEN (Dublin University): I was a Member of the Select Committee, and I must say that the Amendments I moved were adopted. I also think there is a general opinion in favour of the Bill.

Mr. EWART (Belfast, N.): The Local Bankruptcy Bill is, undoubtedly, viewed with much favour in the North, and in some other parts of Ireland. I took part in the Committee upon the Bill; but I have since been informed that it is the opinion of the people of Belfast that the Bill would not be satisfactory in its operation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! It is quite irregular to discuss this Bill on this Vote—reference may be made to it, but it cannot be discussed.

Mr. EWART: I only rose at the request of the hon. Member opposite to express my views.

Mr. SEXTON: All objections were disposed of by the acceptance of Amendments in Committee, and I would appeal to the Government to apply to the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Armagh to remove his block.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): In the event of this Bill—which can be easily passed—not passing, I trust the people of Belfast will understand its defeat is entirely owing to the action of the hon. Baronet who represents Mid Armagh.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I would wish to make an appeal to the Government with regard to the Return of people held in confinement by order of the Bankruptcy Court. I would appeal to them to continue that Return at such periods as would appear to them to be convenient for the information of the House. There are instances of persons kept in gaol for 18 and 20 months, and I have seen people committed for contempt of Court of whose case I am sure the Judge became utterly oblivious in the end. That could not happen if a Return were presented to the House, so that the Representatives for Ireland could have an opportunity of criticizing these cases. I appeal to the Government to continue this Return without any formal Motion, or to say whether they would be willing to grant it if moved for.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If any hon. Gentleman asks for the Return I have no doubt that it will be granted.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I wish to call attention to a particular case that occurred in connection with these bankruptcy proceedings, and which happened on the estate of Mr. Herbert O'Sullivan. A number of cases were taken into the Bankruptcy Court by the Secretary to the National League, and in accordance with common justice, owing to the very bad state of affairs in the country, Judge Boyd made reductions over the entire estate; he gave the tenants a reduction of 30 per cent, with the single exception of a Mr. Timothy Lucy. It was a very hard case, and remonstrance was made again and again; but, unfortunately, in vain.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand the hon. Gentleman is calling attention to an order made by the Judge, and that would be quite irregular.

DR. TANNER: It is an order of the Court.

THE CHAIRMAN: It would be quite irregular.

DR. TANNER: It is because it was so irregular that I wished to call attention to it.

MR. M. J. KENNY: Is it not competent to call attention to the action of the Judge by moving the reduction of his salary?

THE CHAIRMAN: No; that cannot be done.

MR. M. J. KENNY: The Court of Appeal has decided this is not part of the Superior Court, and therefore these Judges would not come within the rule that has proceeded from the Chair.

THE CHAIRMAN: I am not aware of that.

DR. TANNER: I would not do anything in the world you could find exception to; but I thought that, being the Court of Bankruptcy, the position of the Judge was not the same as that of the other Judges.

MR. SEXTON: I shall move a reduction of the Vote on the ground that I cannot agree to the continuance of this system of bankruptcy. I therefore move to reduce the sum by £2,000, and I make complaint that six months after the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary adopted the principle of my Bill the Government declined to give me any facilities to pass it. Even at the present date, if the Government would use their influence, the Bill might be passed into law, and I make this Motion for the purpose of making it clear the failure is no fault of mine, but due to one or two Committee Members, whose motives, if not personal, I find it impossible to analyze. I make this Motion also for the purpose of giving the Government an opportunity of saying whether they will give me any facilities or not.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £4,140, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has moved the reduction of this Vote in order, as he contends, to put his own position beyond question. I do not doubt that the hon. Gentleman is seriously desirous of passing the Bill, and I can assure him, on behalf of myself and the Government, we also approve generally of the Bill brought forward by the hon. Gentleman. When he says he moves this reduction in order to draw the attention of the Committee to the neglect of the Government to give facilities, I must ask him to remember that not only Bills which the Government approve, but the Bill on this subject, which they themselves brought forward, they have been obliged to abandon owing to the exigencies of the Session.

MR. SEXTON: Your Bill was not at the same stage.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman asks us to use our influence to get the block removed; but he must be aware that all the Government can do is to express their own opinion, and leave it to hon. Members to take what independent action they choose. I have never concealed, either from the hon. Gentleman or my hon. Friends behind me, that we believe, in the main, the Bill is a good one; and whilst the Government adhere to that view, it is not possible—and, if possible, would not be desirable—to exercise pressure upon them to pursue a course they consider inconsistent with their public duty. I do not think the hon. Gentleman can reasonably ask us for more facilities than he has, considering that we ourselves have taken steps in regard to Bills we have introduced and could not pass.

DR. TANNER: The right hon. Gentleman has said that the Government were not antagonistic to the Bill; he took up exactly the same position with regard to it as his Predecessors; and I would like to call, not his attention, but the attention of one of the Junior Lords of the Treasury, the Committee Whip, and also the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), to last Wednesday week, when we had Business before a quarter to 6. On that occasion we entered into a sort of compact to try and get this Bill through; but notwithstanding the fact that we had the sanction and approval of the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary, notwithstanding the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary was also in favour of it; still, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury wanted to get four Bills through for this one, and it was merely a difference in the bargain that prevented it being brought forward.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 47; Noes 112: Majority 65.—(Div. List, No. 442.) [12.30 A.M.]

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(4.) £9,266, to complete the sum for Registry of Deeds, Ireland.

(5.) £73,028 (including a Supplementary sum of £37,575), to complete the sum for the Irish Land Commission.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I know that it is difficult to criticize a Vote of this important character at this time, especially when a new Land Act has just come before the country. I do not see the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland here; but before I touch on the technical part of the Vote, I will express my deep regret that the Land Commission should have issued the notification to the Government that they did with regard to a Bill passing through this House. I think their conduct in this respect is absolutely without parallel in the history of Government Departments in Ireland, especially where, as is the case in the present instance, the Department taking such a course had judicial, and, I might almost say, Executive functions committed to it. And I must say that I think it is a matter calling for strong observation that the Land Commission should have addressed a joint note signed by the three Commissioners to Her Majesty's Government requiring or suggesting that a particular Bill passing through the House of Commons should be shaped in a particular manner. I think no worse instance of the decomposition of public life in Ireland could be instanced than that a Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature, accompanied by two gentlemen who have occupied seats on the Judicial Bench for seven years, should have put their names to this unfortunate document. I deplore it as an instance of the complete wreck and chaos to which we are reduced in Ireland, that these gentlemen who occupy a judicial position in Ireland, are, at the same time, part of the working executive in Ireland, should take it upon themselves to declare that the House of Commons was not sufficiently explicit in its statements. I say that this statement is not only an insult to the House of Commons, and an insult to the House of Lords, to which the Bill had then passed, but that the action of the Commissioners is absolutely foreign to every idea of what ought to be the action of men possessing and exercising judicial functions. Let us take it in this way. Suppose that the Cass case in England were to result in the introduction of some new law relating to the action of magistrates in such cases; and suppose that in connection with that Bill Mr. Stead's Act dealing with solicitation came under consideration, and that some twopenny-halfpenny dog-breaker in the country who was not satisfied with the Bill said—"I think the House of Commons is making a great mistake. I am one of the Great Unpaid, and I desire to place my opinions on record—which I put in the shape of a letter to the Home Secretary—that the House of Commons' manner of dealing with an important Act is not satisfactory"—the only result would be this gentleman would be laughed at. Why should it be different when we are dealing with Ireland, and with a question of rent and cash? I wonder who it was that gave these gentlemen the idea of writing this unfortunate document on the 9th of the last month. They begin their letter as if it were a State document, and I have no doubt that the penny stamp which carried their letter was paid for by the Imperial Exchequer. They had no idea, I am sure, of charging themselves with even a penny stamp in connection with the writing of this monstrous and indecent letter. Here is the letter in regard to a Bill passing through the House of Commons—a House elected as the Representatives of the people. It is said that we do not know what we are doing; that even the great Primrose League Party in this and the other House do not know what they are doing; that we are mere scum on the waves of legislation in regard to Irish land; and that, therefore, the Irish Land Court is going to ask the House of Commons and the House of Lords what they shall do. Here is what they have the audacity to say—"Considering the enormous responsibility thrown on the Court" — as if they were not well paid for bearing this responsibility; as if they would not willingly take that responsibility for £5,000 a-year paid quarterly. Then they go on to talk of "the responsibility in regard to the temporary reduction of judicial rents," as if they had not already dealt with a quarter of a million of judicial rents. Then they say, as to the Bill before Parliament—and I consider this almost amounts to a Breach of Privilege—"that more precise guidance should be given in the Act of Parliament"—it was not then an Act of Parliament, but only a Bill; fancy members of the judicature speaking of a Bill as if it were an Act of Parliament—a Bill that might have been rejected at any part of its course. But let that pass. They say that they "are of opinion that more precise guidance should be given in the Act of Parliament as to the nature of the provisions to be applied to the reduction of judicial rents." A more incongruous document was surely never addressed to the House of Commons; but bad as was the act of the Commissioners in penning this mean and miserable letter, I think it was even worse for the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to produce it. These men might have been misled; they might have written this letter in a moment of passion. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, I will withdraw the word "passion," as unfit for the cerulean atmosphere of the Land Commission. But then comes the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and produces their letter. They did not put private on the letter, I imagine, and that I suppose was their error; but both Mr. Justice O'Hagan and Mr. Litton, on reading their letter next morning in the newspapers, must, I should think, have been surprised that it should be made public. They meant, no doubt, to have kept it between themselves. They only wanted to do a little of that nudging which goes on between the Irish judicature and the Irish Executive; but the Government went and published their letter, and under what circumstances? The Bill had been sent down from the House of Lords, where grave changes had been made in it. The House of Lords have had the Bill before them from Thursday to Saturday, and the complaint was——

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I rise to a point of Order. I wish to ask whether in connection with this Vote the hon. and learned Gentleman is justified in criticizing the action of the Government in producing this letter?

MR. T. M. HEALY: The right hon. Gentleman has no right to assume to know what I am going to say. I am going to deal with this point, that the Government produced this letter in the House of Commons on a given date, and stated in the House of Commons that their reason for making certain alterations in the Bill was this letter, whereas they did not produce it in the House of Lords, but allowed the House of Lords to remain suspended in judgment from Thursday to Saturday, and this, too, although the Amendments submitted to the Lords had only been printed half-an-hour before they were submitted to them. What is the excuse of the Goverement for at last producing this letter? It was that pressure was brought to bear upon them by the Land Commission. But I think that all ends would have been attained if the Government would have stood up at that Table and justified the Amendments they were proposing. But the letter, whether written for production or not, was a most deplorable letter. It shows that in dealing with the Land Commission we are not dealing with a firm and stable body, but with men who are blown aside by every wind of doctrine. This letter was addressed to the Government by two gentlemen who are to go out of office next year, and whose appointments are in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. Now, one of them—Mr. Wrench—has only been lately appointed in the place of the late Mr. Vernon. I will therefore say nothing of Mr. Wrench. My experience of him extends only to two or three cases, and therefore I will suspend my judgment until I have had more experience of him. Mr. Litton has had more experience. He sat in this House all the time that the Land Act was passing through it, and has since had six years' experience on the Bench. Mr. Justice O'Hagan is the best poet and the worst Judge that ever sat on the Irish Bench. His poetry is admirable. You could sit all day and read, and then spend all the night thinking of it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Is it in Order that on this Vote Members should attack both the motives and the actions of the Land Commissioners?

THE CHAIRMAN: The action of the Land Commission as a body is subject to criticism on this Vote. The personal action of the head of a Judicial Commission who is also a member of the High Court of Judicature is not a fitting subject of criticism.

MR. T. M. HEALY: But Mr. Justice O'Hagan signs this letter, and it is impossible therefore to separate him from his colleagues. If I were to criticize or to blame Mr. Litton and Mr. Wrench and were not to criticize or to apportion any blame to the third gentleman it might be considered that I was unjust to Mr. Litton and Mr. Wrench. However, I am glad to have twice had these interruptions from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. It shows that the Government are aware of and appreciate the fact that these gentlemen have acted in an improper manner; and that this action of a Judicial Commission in regard to judicial rents is a matter in regard to which the Government do not feel on safe ground. I now come to the question of the manner in which the Land Commission propose to administer the new Act. We have passed an Act dealing with leaseholders; and I would first call attention to the fact that under this Statute there has necessarily been an appointment of a number of Sub-Commissioners, with regard to whom grave doubt must be felt. It is understood that these Sub-Commissioners have been appointed for one year—if I am wrong as to the length of the term I shall be glad to be corrected—but I condemn altogether the appointment of men for only one year certain as most unfortunate. For the men thus appointed go about the country believing that their appointment will be exhausted in a year's time; and they, therefore, naturally want during that time to make friends with the mammon of iniquity. Being only appointed for a year they believe that their only hope of re-appointment lies in pleasing the Government. We found that the judgments of the men appointed for one year in 1881-2-3 were wanting in stability. It would be far better that these men should be appointed in fewer numbers than that they should only be appointed for one year; for these men hardly get accustomed to their office or able to discharge its duties satisfactorily in less than a year's time, and yet it must be remembered that every decision they give is subject to criticism. A number of these gentlemen indeed are re-appointed, nor do I blame the Government for having gone back to some of the old Commissioners. On the contrary, I think they are well-advised in taking that course, but then I cannot help remarking that the gentlemen whom they have selected very much belong to one class. I do not want to bring in the names of particular gentlemen, but I must say that the fact is very curious that the majority in all Government appointments in Ireland should always belong to one class. When you dismiss Resident Magistrates it is remarkable that they should be Catholics, and that, on the other hand, those who are re-appointed to office should be Protestants. That offers a very serious subject for consideration, but I will not dwell on it now in the hope that the Government will abstain from bringing pressure to bear on these Commissioners, and, at the same time, bearing in mind the fact that they are now only on the threshold of their career. Considering what mistakes were made by their Predecessors whereby Parliament was compelled to revise the rents fixed in 1881-2-3 I would hope that this fact may have some effect on these gentlemen, and may induce them to fix rents without regard to class or influence. Professor Baldwin, I am sorry to say, is now no more. I greatly deplore his loss. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) will, I am sure, bear me out when I say that he certainly did endeavour to do justice between landlord and tenant. But there was a remark made by Professor Baldwin, and I thought it showed the prescience of the man. He had been a party to fixing some very high rents, and so long back as 1882 or 1883 he wrote to the papers to say that those rents would not be fair if prices fell to their present level. This gentleman is dead, but his words remain, and I trust that his words will fix themselves in the minds and in the memory of the remaining members of the Sub-Commission so that whether their term of office extends for two, three or six months, they will endeavour to do justice in regard to the rents they fix altogether indifferent to the losses that may accrue to the landlords in consequence of their making reductions, or to the tenants by their failing to make reductions. I hope they will decide the questions submitted to them solely by reference to the character of the improvements on the farms, the state of the seasons and prices and so on, without regard to politics. If anyone will look back to *Hansard* for the last five years, they will see that so long back I have lifted up my voice against the action of the Land Commission. The Government did not then take our advice, and consequently you are now in your present positions. Now that you have appointed a fresh Commission I ask them to remember that they are sworn to administer the law without regard to politics, and that they will not in that respect follow the example of Mr. Cecil Rhodes. I now pass to the question of the appeals made from the Sub-Commissioners to the Land Commission. On a matter of this kind no one will speak with more deference than I shall do to the opinion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson). I think that we have been fortunate in his presence during these debates, and that we have had opposed to us a Gentleman of his experience and of his type of character. I am sorry that he is going to be made a Judge, and that he will perhaps be spoiled. I fear he may then become possessed of those objectionable qualities which belong to so many of our Judges. But although his views as to the rules drafted by the Commissioners are entitled to great respect, it must not be forgotten that it is easy to make statements which will not always bear the light of experience. I quite agree that future experience may prove my observations to be incorrect, but I do not think that the two meagre rules issued by the Land Commission with regard to leaseholders entirely meet the case. I do not care now to go further than this; but finding myself on that broad statement I will reserve my judgment on other points. I am merely a critic, and I admit a very imperfect critic, but still while admitting my own imperfection, I must say that I do not think that the two rules of the Land Commission will entirely meet the case. I think cases will arise that will break down the rules. It is a delicate matter, and I will not go further now than to say that the leaseholders of Ireland are entitled to great consideration. The Government refused to accept our Amendments dealing with leaseholders. They met our views no doubt to a certain extent, but without meeting the bottom point we had in our minds as to the non-recognition of the status of these men. I have asked a question that would go to the bottom of the landlords' action in regard to leaseholders by requesting that when an originating notice is served by anyone from this time forward that that notice should simply be dealt with as a question of fair rent and nothing else, unless the landlord lodges an action. I am told that this is merely a matter of pleading; but that I deny, and moreover I say that in this matter the Land Commission have been ruled to too great an extent by the Resolutions of the House of Lords passed in 1882-3. I now ask the Government and the Land Commission to consider whether, on serving an originating notice by the tenant on the landlord, the law should not require the landlord to lodge an action within a certain time if he desires to raise any other than a question of fair rent. I think that would not be unreasonable. I think that the present system does not work satisfactorily, and no one knows it better than the right hon. Gentleman opposite. And even if he does not know it himself, he has Mr. Carson as his assistant, and a more competent man he cannot have. Mr. Carson is one of the most adroit practitioners in the Land Court, and he knows as well as I do that when the tenant has got a fair rent in the Sub-Commission Court, and the landlord appeals on the question of rent and value, it is monstrous that the landlord should then be allowed to commence a cross-examination as to subletting or status. I think the tenant should be forewarned and advised on points of this kind. I think as the Irish Land Commission have given in to the opinion of the House of Lords on the question of Procedure, every opinion in favour of the tenants is of some value on the other side. We only want the rights of the tenants protected as those of the landlords are, and I think we may fairly ask the Government to consider this point. The Land Commission have decided that an appeal is a rehearing. I say that it is most unjust. I say that the tenant should know the horse that the landlord is going to win upon. There are other questions regarding the whole rental of Ireland, and I think the Land Commission and the Government would be well advised, and their action would inspire public confidence in regard to appointments and reappointments, if they considered that subject. Any appointments which remain, whether of the Land Commissioners or Sub-Commissioners, are a matter of some importance, and we shall know from their action and acts, whether their appointments are executive acts or judicial acts. We ask that the Land Commission should have some little say in the matter of reappointment. The matter is one of considerable urgency as well as of some considerable delicacy—I believe even Land Commissioners can learn wisdom from what has taken place—therefore, in the present circumstances, I guard myself from making what might be unfairly critical observations on these appointments.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The speech which the hon. and learned Gentleman has just delivered, I am glad to recognize as being, on the whole, a moderate speech, though I am sorry to say, he did not refrain altogether from casting imputations on the Court whose usefulness he recognized. Two of the Land Commissioners, not being permanent appointments, are not free as other Judges are from Parliamentary criticism of the kind which the hon. and learned Gentleman has made.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Might I, Mr. Courtney, with great respect point out that the ruling of Mr. Speaker Brand, and of the present Speaker following him, was that as the salaries of these Judges fell on the Consolidated Fund, a distinct Motion to impeach them would require to be made. I think that is a matter of the utmost importance. I would not be even in Order in criticizing the salary of Judge O'Hagan.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman mistook the point of my remarks. I did not suggest he was out of Order, because I conceive if he had been out of Order, you, Mr. Courtney, would have called him to Order. What I say caused the regret I expressed was that a technical difference in the mode in which these Judges and other Judges are paid, should render it possible for the hon. and learned Gentleman to make imputations on their conduct which he would have been prevented by the Rules of the House from doing in the case of the other Judges. I will deal with the points which the hon. and learned Gentleman has raised, in the reverse order of that in which he has raised them. The last question he put was whether we were to regard the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners as purely coming from the Executive or whether the Land Commissioners were consulted. The Executive is purely responsible for these appointments, though any representation made by the Land Commission would receive consideration from those who are responsible for these appointments. Then the next point he proceeded to deal with was, I think, the question of the Rules of Court. Upon that subject I confess I do not feel competent to give any opinion. It is not a matter which comes within my cognizance. The Land Commissioners are solely responsible, and even if I were competent to criticize them, I should not feel inclined to do so. Then the next point which the hon. and learned Gentleman touched upon was the permanent nature of the sub-Commissioners' appointments.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: Non-permanent.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Exactly so—the non-permanent nature of the appointments of the Sub-Commissioners. The hon. and learned Gentleman pointed out that they were appointed for one year. With the general spirit of his observations I am disposed to concur. I thing that on the whole, speaking broadly, the longer the tenure of office of a Judge is, the more his usefulness will be. But the hon. and learned Gentleman must be aware that by the recent Bill, we have brought in a flood of business that requires temporarily dealing with. If, therefore, we only appointed a few Sub-Commissioners and gave them a permanent tenure of office, we should have a great mass of arrears; and if we appointed a large number permanently, we should have to saddle the country with the payment of officials who might find themselves with nothing to do. Then the hon. and learned Gentleman said that the Sub-Commissioners who had been appointed had been selected on Party grounds, or, at all events, on religious grounds.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I did not say that.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman hinted at that.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I said that it was a curious fact that of the appointments the majority were Protestants, and of omissions made the majority were Catholics.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think, Sir, I was justified in saying that the hon. and learned Gentleman had hinted that we were influenced by political considerations—at all events religious considerations. He will not deny that. I can only say on behalf of the Irish Government that no such motives have influenced us at all. I believe in the gentlemen we have appointed all the leading—if I may use such an expression—all the leading creeds in Ireland are represented. There are Roman Catholics, there are Presbyterians, and there are members of the Irish Episcopal Church; and I do not think there is any ground for the suggestions or the hints of the hon. and learned Gentleman that we have been influenced by any other motive than that of competence in the persons to be appointed. Then I pass to the first part of the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech—that part, namely, in which he impugns the personal action of the Government, and more especially the action of the Land Court in writing to the Government that letter the terms of which he has so severely criticized. Sir, in my opinion, the Land Court, holding the opinions they did upon the subject, were well advised, and did no more than their simple duty, in calling the attention of the Government to the difficulties of the Act which they have to carry out. I am sure the hon. and learned Gentleman may find some cases—the codification of the Criminal Law, for instance—in which the opinions of the Judges have been taken. But I do not wish to dwell upon that—I do not admit that that case is absolutely on all fours with the present case. And why are they not on all fours? Because the action of the Land Commission under this new Bill, is not a judicial action in the sense in which an ordinary Court performs a judicial action when it interprets an Act of Parliament.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Why did you rise to Order? You rose to Order, and said I was raising a question with regard to these gentlemen performing judicial actions. Now you make a contrary assertion.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: What I objected to, and what I still object to, is that the hon. and learned Gentleman made a most offensive suggestion with reference to the Land Commission—namely, that two of their members were actually influenced, or might be influenced in the course they pursued, by the fact that the tenure of their office was temporary. If anything I could have done could have prevented the hon. and learned Gentleman making that observation, I would have been glad to do it. I come back to the argument of the hon. and learned Gentleman on the question. What is the character of the duties which the Land Commission has to perform under the Act? In fact—the hon. and learned Gentleman will not deny—the duties they have to perform are really the duties of arbitration. We are casting upon these three gentlemen the unexampled duty—the hon. and learned Gentleman asked for a precedent—is there any precedent for such a duty?—of the arbitration of an enormous number of agricultural disputes, affecting a large proportion of the agricultural population over the whole of Ireland. I venture to say, never was an attempt made by the Legislature of any country, to throw on any body of men, the powers of dealing with the interests of a large class, such as we have thrown upon the Land Commission. In my opinion, they would have been guilty of a grave dereliction of duty, if, knowing that this power was to be cast upon them without their consent, they had not asked the House, to, at all events, lay down rules of such precision, such clearness, and of such unquestionable a character, that they should have no doubt as to how they should exercise the unexampled powers entrusted to them. I apprehend that that consideration, and that consideration alone, meets the two points of the hon. and learned Gentleman. It meets the point that there was no precedent for such action, the point that there was no such appeal from the judicial body to this House, and it meets the point that there was no precedent for this House giving them advice on the subject. I certainly think when they asked for instruction as to how they should act in the exercise of the enormous duties that were cast upon them in every direction, that this House was bound to give them all the assistance in that respect which it had in its power to give.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I wish to call the attention of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman), or the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. J. Balfour) to the fact that there are a great many people who are put to expense by reason of the negligence of the officials who serve under the Commissioners. I could instance one case where the solicitor of a tenant wrote to the Commission asking if they have power to stay proceedings on a notice to quit by reason of sub-letting, and the Commissioners wrote back to say they had. When the case came on for trial the Commissioners declared they had no jurisdiction, and the man had to bear the cost of witnesses, solicitor, and other law costs, he had involved himself in. Even if he had got a reduction, these costs would cover for a great many years the benefit he would have got from the reduction. At any rate, the small reductions which the Sub-Commissioners did give were utterly useless to the people, and unless in the administration of this Act reductions are given so as to enable people to live and thrive, the Act will be a nullity. Therefore we press on the Government the necessity, in any appointments to the Land Commission, of appointing men who will really take the circumstances of the tenants into consideration. If proper reductions had been given under the Act of 1881 and until now, you would not have had cause for recent legislation. It was because the Commissioners did not give adequate reductions that the Government were compelled to bring in a Bill to deal with the subject. I merely mention this in order that the Government may use such pressure upon the Sub-Commissioners as will enable the tenants to get some relief.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, N.): Before the Vote is taken I want to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to a matter of common complaint. In the Estimate, under the head of the Irish Land Commission, there appear the items, Judicial Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners, first, second, and third class, and lower division clerks. And yet, when the very simplest Question is addressed to the Department by people who are interested in obtaining a straightforward answer, they are put off with the vaguest possible kind of an answer. As a case in point, I asked a Question to-day of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary about some constituents of mine. They applied in last May to have a fair rent fixed for their farms—not a matter of very great importance to the right hon. Gentleman, perhaps, but still a matter of very great importance to these poor people—and they wanted to know whether the fair rent will be fixed, or their cases will be heard before the 1st of November or not. Well, one would think that even one of the third class clerks that are spoken of here, who takes in the names of the applicants and enters the applications up, would, after this Department has been in work for six years, be able to calculate the rate of progress, and give the tenants some idea when their cases would be heard. Well, I am told to-day, and it is all the answer I have to give to these people, that their cases will be heard some time—whether before Christmas or after Christmas, we have no idea. What I want to know now, Sir, is whether the cases of these tenants will be heard before November or not? It will surely be a very easy thing to answer that simple question—not narrowing down the right hon. Gentleman to a day, or a week, or even a month—so that these people may know that their cases will be heard in November or after. It is a matter of very great importance to these people, because they want to know whether they will have to pay their rent upon an unfair rent or upon a fair rent, which they hope to have fixed at some time; and I should like the right hon. Gentleman to give me some satisfaction upon this point before the Vote is taken.

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY for IRELAND (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I wish very much that I could answer the hon. Gentleman in a manner satisfactory to his constituents. I quite understand the hardship in the case of people not knowing exactly when their rents will be fixed; but it is really impossible for the Commissioners to know until some little time before when these cases will be taken. It is impossible to know the number of applications that will come before them at a particular time. There may be in the two or three counties which precede this particular county a large number of applications or a small number, and it is their duty to hear all the cases that come before them, and to consider the number when they make their appointments. There may be 200 cases, or there may be 300 cases, and until the Commissioners know the number of cases put down for the Session, which will be coming on in the ensuing autumn, it is impossible to say when they will be in a certain county on the Circuit. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that the Commissioners do their best to fix the earliest day they possibly can.

Mr. NOLAN: I would ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman if he will promise to communicate with the Land Commission, and ask them to give an answer to these farmers?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I will.

Vote *agreed to.*

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I would ask the Government respectfully to postpone the next Vote—"County Court Officers, &c." It is one on which a great deal of discussion will arise, and we have only just put into our hands the names of the gentlemen who are to be appointed Revising Barristers. I blame myself I did not ask a question this morning as to who the 16 gentlemen are to be, and I think it is a reasonable thing to ask the Government to consent to postpone this Vote. There are only two other Votes in the Class which are likely to give rise to much discussion.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am quite ready to postpone this Vote, if, as I understand, the hon. and learned Gentleman would allow us to have the other Votes without much discussion.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: The Prisons Vote must have discussion.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no objection to postpone this Vote.

(6.) £85,000, to complete the sum for the Dublin Metropolitan Police.

(7.) £83,050, to complete the sum for Prisons, Ireland.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I now ask the Government to fulfil the pledge which was given by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary during the discussions on the Crimes Act. The Government were asked to consider the question of the treatment of prisoners under the Crimes Act, and especially prisoners committed for minor offences. With regard to men of a high rank in life, entrusted with positions of great confidence, these men ought not to be put in the position of Moonlighters. For myself, if I have to go to prison I ask for no favour. I will endeavour to keep out of prison as long as I can, but asking for no favour whatever myself, or for anything but fair play, I say it is against the best interests of the Government to reduce a Representative of the people to the position of a Moonlighter, to reduce persons accused, say, of the offence of sedition, of what is a political offence, to the same class as that of a man charged with Moonlighting. The Government have great power. I think they should work this Act as Mr. Forster did. He worked it, it is true, under circumstances which gave rise to great hardship. Nevertheless, there was no such feeling generated under Mr. Forster's working of the Crimes Act as there was in 1867 and 1868 with regard to the treatment of prisoners then. We know a great deal of feeling has arisen among persons in America on this subject. It was simply because of your treatment of O'Donovan Rossa in prison that the dynamite campaign arose. You had that man for 40 days with his hands tied behind his back, so that he had to lie down and lap his food like a dog. These men who will go in under this Act ought to be treated according to the measure of their iniquity—no better and no worse. The Government will have nothing to gain by treating these men as if they were criminals of the darkest die. Six ounces of oatmeal in the morning, plus six ounces at night, plus six ounces of bread in the middle of the day, is an absurd diet to give to a prisoner. It is absurd to suppose that the influence of bad food and a miserable diet will bring a man's feelings down. Instead of having bad food, a man ought to have good food.

Then a man should have the option of hard labour. I think every prisoner sentenced under the Crimes Act should have the option of having hard labour, because he gets several ounces more food, and what is involved by hard labour is extremely little more. One of the meanest things about England is its fallacy about this matter. You talk about this confinement within high walls as a pleasant enjoyable relaxation. Why do not you try it? The Government have given us a pledge as to how they will treat their political prisoners. If they do not do so, these men will, in their own locality, have their prestige added to and will be regarded as martyrs in consequence of the prison treatment to which they will have been subjected. There is not a man on the Treasury Bench I could not reduce to a condition of ineptitude if I had it in my power to deprive them of sunlight for several months. When I was in Richmond we were drilled in a yard which was surrounded on all sides with high walls, and the smoke blew into our faces. During the four months I was in there I never breathed a breath of fresh air, and the only place we were exercised in was a little miserable triangular place where we marched round and round, and where we had the smoke blown right into our faces. I say that prisoners are entitled to fresh air if not to food, and to food if not to fresh air. Prisoners are men, and it is a monstrous thing to deprive them of both. The idea of this Crimes Act of yours is not simply that it is a punitive measure but a preventive measure. Now, it may seem that I am pleading for ourselves, but I am not doing that. As I have said, I shall do my best to keep out of prison, and I shall only go in when it is absolutely necessary to do so; therefore do not attach any feeling of bravado to what I say on this matter. I plead for men unable to plead for themselves, men imprisoned for simply returning for shelter to their miserable holdings after being put out by the Sheriff, men who are carrying on a purely political fight such as you have applauded when carried on in Hungary, in Italy, or in Greece. They will go into prison, and they will come out again as martyrs to the cause in which they are engaged, and your prison rules will not deprive them of the respect of their countrymen. Now, Mr. Forster treated his prisoners fairly well; but every one of them suffered in health from the confinement. The illness from which my hon. Friend the Member for Cork (Mr. Parnell) is now suffering was, I believe, brought about by that imprisonment, and the health of others of my hon. Friends has suffered from the same cause. But not to speak of these, dozens of men have died—some have gone out of their minds, and all have been impaired in health, from their prison treatment. I say you have no right to take away their liberty, and inflict a life-long disability upon them and sufferings felt years hence. Confinement between high prison walls is bad enough for the most vigorous constitutions; the least you can do is not to starve the prisoners and deprive them of fresh air.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I sincerely hope the hon. and learned Member will not have to undergo the disagreeable incidents to which he has alluded.

MR. T. M. HEALY: That is not the point.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is a point to which the hon. Member himself made reference, and that is why I refer to it. The policy upon which we have proceeded is simple. We are not of opinion, and I have never had the opinion, that prisoners under the Act require exceptional treatment. We consider that every man who is an offender under this Act, and is condemned for his offence, ought to have been condemned under the ordinary law; and if he was not so condemned, it is because of a failure of the machinery of the ordinary law, not that there is any difference in substance between the old law and the new. The offences are substantially the same, and I do not see any ground for altering the treatment of those who come under the operation of the law in one way or the other. I have made it my business to inquire into the treatment of prisoners, and to find out whether that treatment is the same in Ireland as in England, and I find it is under similar circumstances. I cannot suggest that any alteration in Irish prison discipline should be made in regard to one Act. If that discipline is wrong in one country it is wrong in both, and we ought to deal with it as a whole, in relation to the Criminal Law as a whole, and not in reference to one Criminal Act. The hon. and learned Gentleman has attempted to draw a distinction between Members of Parliament——

MR. T. M. HEALY: No. I said that political prisoners should be treated differently to those convicted of manslaughter and other criminal acts. I would like to know—I hope the Committee will pardon me for using a vulgar illustration—how would the right hon. Gentleman like to be treated as my hon. Friend the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) was, and be deprived of a pocket-handkerchief for a month, and obliged to blow his nose with his fingers?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Gentleman alluded in his speech to certain imaginary persons——

MR. T. M. HEALY: He is not an imaginary person.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Who were disposed to look upon prison life as rather an agreeable retirement. I do not myself adopt that view——

MR. T. M. HEALY: We ask for decency, nothing more.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and learned Member asks that a certain class of prisoners convicted under the new law should be subject to a different discipline. My view is that the discipline should be the same as under the old law.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Give us handkerchiefs.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope the hon. and learned Member will allow me to finish my remarks, however he may differ from their substance. The discipline under the old and new law should be the same. There may be grounds for changing that discipline in the prisons of England and Ireland; but if that be the case, it is not more or less because of the passing of the Crimes Act, it is a question to be dealt with on its merits. I have inquired into the Irish system of prison discipline to ascertain if it differed from the English discipline, and I find there is no difference—it is the same. Under the circumstances, I see no ground for making a special inquiry into the Irish prison discipline, though I am perfectly ready, on the part of the Irish Executive, to enter into an inquiry into the whole system of prison discipline in England and Ireland.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): It arouses indignation against the Government of our unfortunate country, it is a burning shame, a crying injustice, that an Act essentially political in its application to the people of Ireland should be administered by rules under which you say prisoners shall be just as well treated as thieves and pickpockets in England; that no change in discipline is required. What is that treatment? I suppose it would be almost sacrilege to suggest that any right hon. Gentleman opposite would be subject to it. Yet, Sir, some of us who have been so treated have been as honest men from our boyhood, and held as blameless in our lives as any of the occupants of that Bench. We have been known in the locality in which we lived, and have earned here the confidence and respect of our people, and have never been accused of any crime except those your Government invented for us, and for which we have been flung into prison and treated like dogs. The right hon. Gentleman talks in frigid tones of prison discipline; let me refer to my own case. [*A laugh.*] The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland laughs; but it is no laughing matter to me——

MR. GIBSON: Indeed, I did not laugh.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: No; I beg pardon. I will not say he did. I was too hot in this matter. I beg his pardon. Perhaps it will be no great infliction on the Committee if I detail the treatment of those you have kept in prison, and who were honest and respected among their fellows up to the time the Government laid hands upon them, on no charge, and brought them within the purview of the Criminal Law. In the first place, after being conducted to prison, I was required to take off my clothes and dress myself in prisoners' garments. It is not too much to ask, I think, that these should be clean. It may be unpleasant, but we must talk of these matters. Among the garments that come down by devolution from criminals who have worn them, there is one a man has naturally the greatest objection to get into—the breeches, in fact. I got a new jacket and waistcoat, but an old pair of breeches in which some criminal had luxuriated in company with a number of parasites for months before. I know these are nasty subjects; but remember, at the same time, that this is the treatment that will be applied to present Members of Parliament, and every respectable man, convicted of crimes you have manufactured in this House under false pretences. It would have been no great extravagance, seeing I had half-a-year before me, to have given me a new pair of breeches; but the officials would do no such thing. Hon. Gentlemen may, perhaps, turn up their noses at the attempt to discuss these and similar matters; but recollect we stand in danger of this treatment. Here I see an Estimate for bedding. Good Heavens! was there ever such a fraud? I will tell you what happened to Mr. O'Mahoney, who was brought up under a section of the Coercion Act, under which cumulative sentences were possible. What did the magistrates do. Instead of inflicting a sentence of six months' imprisonment, they sentenced him to a month's imprisonment on each of six separate charges. And what was their object? The rules provide, under the ordinary Criminal Law, that a prisoner sentenced to not more than a month's imprisonment shall use a plank bed, and if for a longer period then he shall use it for the first month only. So, through the vindictiveness of the magistrates Mr. O'Mahoney had every month of the whole six months to go upon the plank bed, and every first week of each month he had to go through a course of bread and water as if he were a prisoner commencing a first sentence. Such was the system of persecution pursued in Ireland, and in the result this House, slow to move in the interests of humanity when Ireland is concerned, had to interfere and order that when a prisoner goes into gaol upon cumulative sentences he shall be treated as for one term of imprisonment, that the treatment of Mr. O'Mahoney might not be repeated. What is the bedding we get? You may often hear a man say he can enjoy a stretch on the hearthrug, and that he can sleep very well on a bench at a railway station; but let him try it for a month, and let him try sleeping on a plank for a month. I wish there were more Howards in the present generation; we have a great many Mantilinis, but very few Howards. If there is any hon. Gentleman who desires to know what the treatment is, let him manage through his friends in the Government to obtain a taste of it for a month. The plank bed is not the worst institution applied to political prisoners. What were the hardships of prison life invented for? Were they not to give gaols a deterring influence on hardened criminals going in from time to time? Was it ever intended as a system for the class of prisoners who are to be committed under this Bill? A greater torture than the plank bed itself is the pillow supplied. I could sleep on the hard plank bed myself if only I had half-a-pound of feathers to put my head on. Our heads contain our whole stock in trade, and you might leave them to us at least. Moreover, you torture our bodies, which in some cases, thank God, are strong enough to bear it. But your system is calculated to drive out of his mind a man who has been accustomed to do any intellectual or clerical work of any kind. The prisoner gets a pillow of oakum. It is pleasant enough at first; you would hardly care to exchange it for eider down, and as you stretch yourself out you disregard the plank bed. But as your head rolls about in the course of the night, and many an unpleasant dream follows your wandering thoughts, you roll the tarry oakum into hard lumps, until you fancy you have a bag of small potatoes or marbles under your head. If you will not abolish plank beds, if you say the body shall not be at ease by day or night, for goodness sake spare the head, which represents all that is intellectual, and contains whatever there is of the Divine in the attributes of man. Why we often see, from the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, the discomfort he feels from resting continually on one part of his body, and we see him change his posture, and rest on the curve of his spine. I ask him to imagine how he would feel if he had to recline with his head on a bag of marbles. I would not wish that any hon. or right hon. Gentleman should undergo the experience; I would not have a dog treated so. When by allusion I call up the prospect of any hon. Gentleman enduring these sufferings, do not mistake me. It is not that I would wish our bitterest political opponent treated in the way we have been treated, and I could wish them that state of mind that would not allow us to be treated so. But that is a matter for themselves. If I have said a harsh thing at all, I would recall it, and not even make an exception in the case of the hon. Member for Mid Leicestershire (Mr. De Lisle). These are not pleasant subjects, I know. These Irish nights have not the interest and romance of *The Arabian Nights,* and half-a-year's experience in an Irish prison is not calculated to oil one's tongue, especially when we speak to men who were our gaolers and connived at every instrument of torture, every evil method of securing our conviction and punishment. But I pass it by now, emphasizing what my hon. and learned Friend has said, that you should bear in mind that those against whom this Act will be specially directed are not the inhabitants of towns accustomed to a certain quantity of impure air, but unfortunate farmers and those accustomed to the pure air of rural life. The sentences will be generally imprisonment without hard labour, and the pious, Pharisaic Englishman, reading this, says—"Well, that is not so hard." But the fact is, that the punishment of hard labour consists in being sent into the prison yard to break stones, and the prisoner gets two extra ounces of bread. This is a great consideration to a prisoner; he has the opportunity of air and exercise. He may even be sent outside the inner walls to work in a quarry or field, where a man accustomed to working in the open air would get through the work of two men not so brought up easily enough. What he feels acutely is being kept in his cell 22 hours out or the 24, and set to teazing oakum. Furthermore, if he has even finished his allotted quantity of oakum, and a warder passing by reports him idle, that prisoner is put upon bread and water punishment. Take the case of a man, a poor farmer, 50 or 60 years of age, never before accused of any crime, who in a hasty moment, perhaps, has resisted the writ of the Sheriff or returned for shelter to the home from which he has been turned out, or, perhaps, he has attempted to tell the agent a bit of his mind in the street, that man is locked up under the Act, and, unaccustomed to prison life, he may for a moment stop his weary work, his allotted task being done; he may offer a prayer or lapse into thoughts of his wife and children, and a warder passing catches his fingers idle, even though his work is done, that man is put on bread and water. You say the same punishment is applied to all convicted under the Criminal Law, but that is not so. I have known a man convicted a score of times enjoy his life in gaol, while a farmer, imprisoned for a slight offence under the Act, has been treated barbarously. The accredited corrupt and hardened scoundrel is a sort of midshipman, and can "boss" all around him. I do not wish to wound the susceptibilities of the gallant Admiral opposite; I have the greatest respect for all sailors. I will say he is a sort of petty officer; I will tell you what I mean. A farmer's son—a respectable young man—may be sentenced to six months under the Act, and simultaneously on the same day a hardened criminal may receive a similar sentence; the one may be committed to prison for being a member of the Land League, the other, perhaps, for an attempted outrage on a girl. These two prisoners enter the gaol together; the one has been in gaol many times before, the other hears the door close behind him for the first time. Each of these is entitled to be called upon for fatigue duty, sweeping and washing the corridors, and so on; and very acceptable duty it is for those who would otherwise be locked in their cells. They have the exercise in the corridors and fresher air. The work, however, is such as the farmer has not been accustomed to, while the criminal has often done the work before; he knows every corner, and does the work adroitly and gets approbation, while the farmer gets complaints and bread and water punishment. I have seen men thus ill-treated, not because there was any fair ground for complaint, but for what was called their stupidity. In Heaven's name, cannot you understand that this stupidity, this want of acquaintance with the routine of prison work, means innocence—means that the man is not a criminal! The effect of your prison discipline is to give reward in the shape of better treatment to the more experienced criminal. The right hon. Gentleman says that Irish prisoners are to be treated exactly as those in England. That is not what we want, nor do we ask for special favours. Will you do this? Will you give to prisoners going in under the Coercion Act the option of getting the additional punishment of hard labour which makes prison life more endurable, and do not, by your system, make them devils when they come out of prison, or make them lunatics? There is another odious custom. When the prisoners are paraded and drilled by the warders, the prisoners are required to lift their caps to every little brass-buttoned boy official. Why should this be? The law does not require it. The Irish people have given up the old habit of lifting their hats to their landlords, and they do not care to renew the custom towards their gaolers. But, after all, that may be counted but a sentimental grievance; but such grievances count for something among educated, thoughtful men who are sent to this House to represent their countrymen, and, man for man, are as capable of doing their duty in the House as any right hon. Gentleman over the way. Then there is another barbarous and outrageous custom which exists at present in the gaols. The rules are bad enough, but the way in which they are carried out is worse. After the prisoners have been locked in at 8 o'clock at night, they are wakened up, if they have been able to get to sleep, once, twice, or thrice in the night, to say whether they are all right. When I first heard that phrase and was taught the answer to it, I thought it the greatest mockery on earth. The guard goes round to every cell; there is a loose flange of iron on the door which is struck with a blow of a heavy key that makes as much noise as if it had been delivered with a sledge hammer, and the prisoner has to waken up from sleep and to say, "All right." Was there ever a greater satire than that? A man lying on a plank bed, sore all over, feeling as if every bone in his body was travelling all round the cell, and with his head aching, is wakened up in the midst of torturing dreams to tell the warder that he is "all right!" He is forced to go through that farce in the middle of the night. The prison rules do not require it, and yet it is done. If the prisoner does not answer, the Governor goes into the cell, pulls all the clothes off him, drags him by the toes on to the floor and makes him answer. Now this, I say, is a barbarous custom. Why do not the warders go into the cell and merely throw the light of their lamps on the prisoner, so as to see for themselves whether he is all right? He is not all right, and he is forced to tell a lie and say he is. There is another thing I wish to refer to, and it relates to the class of prisoners who will be sent to gaol under this Act. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) is going to approach the subject of changing the prison rules and prison discipline. We shall be able to give him every assistance, and we can throw some practical light—that is to say, the light of experience—on the subject. But I wish now to treat of the class of men who will be imprisoned under this Act, and to ask whether it is fair to make those men herd with all the criminals in the gaols? I may say that there is nothing that causes more friction and irritation between Parties in this House than the manner in which we are met when we try to draw a distinction between what are called political prisoners and other prisoners in Ireland. I can tell this Committee that the men who have suffered political imprisonment in Ireland are men who—whether they be alive or dead—will ever live in the minds of the Irish people, and some of them are as revered as the greatest patriots of whom any country can boast. When we know how such men as these will be treated in gaol if the present system is maintained, it is not unreasonable that we should ask that there should be some distinction made between them and ordinary prisoners. I do not think that hon. Members opposite, if they visited an Irish prison and saw what happens there—if they saw my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. William O'Brien), the editor of *United Ireland*, walking round the prison yard between two of the blackest criminals in the gaol—would be proud of the Government which sanctions such things or proud of the work of this House. The men who are convicted under this Act will be dressed in prison clothes with the name of the gaol painted on them as large as the name on a man-of-war, and will have to take their rounds, in the manner described by my hon. and learned Friend, between two of the lowest and worst class of criminals. The policy of the Governors of gaols is to put political prisoners in all kinds of odious positions. There is one barbarous and beastly custom which I must refer to. We are obliged to speak plainly on these subjects. Each prisoner when he gets up in the morning has to sweep his cell. He is not trusted with a brush with a handle for fear that he might destroy the British Government with it. He, therefore, has to go down on his knees and sweep the cell with a brush without a handle, then he has to take his slops and go into the closet with them, there is nothing to prevent prisoners of nasty habits from using their chamber utensils in any way they like in following the ordinary dictates of nature. Every man has to take the same towel to wipe out his utensil. The result is that every man of ordinary cleanliness is in danger, if not of catching fever, certainly of being disgusted for the remainder of his life. I wish also to speak of the manner in which children and women will be treated under this Act. The British Government sometimes affects to be too noble to war with women and children. As far as my experience goes, however, they war chiefly with women and children in Ireland. I have seen children of tender years in gaol. The greatest punishment of my imprisonment was to see in the gaol a little boy whom I knew to be an orphan, looking up to the skies and calling on his mother and then bursting out crying. That was worse to me than the three months' imprisonment which I had still to serve. This boy was sent to gaol for two months for intimidation. I have seen respectable young girls sent to gaol because they went out on to the roadway to try and prevent cattle being seized. There was a house, used by the doctor, which stood between the male and female yards in the prison in which I was confined, and from the male exercise yard I have looked through the open door and the window of that house and seen those respectable girls taking exercise between two women of the streets. Sir, that is a disgrace. I swear before Heaven that, in any effort that could be made, I would willingly lose my life to prevent that wrong occurring again. And, Sir, if we do no more than talk about these matters, without being able to get them remedied by Parliament, it is only because we believe and hope that we are near getting the whole system of tyranny abolished. Otherwise the indignities which we have seen inflicted on our people would make us gladly lose our lives, or, at least, set very little value on them, whether we lost them or not. Whatever charges of treason you may bring against us, you cannot bring any such charges against these young girls. They may try to prevent their cattle being seized; they may throw a stone at the cattle to drive them back, or they may use words of intimidation, but they will do nothing more serious than this. And yet, says the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, if they are put into gaol they will be treated like criminals in England. They will be treated like the vile prostitutes of the streets; like those who have lost all title to the name of woman. No, they will be treated worse, because women of that character know the ways of gaols, and the matrons are glad of their help; but are hard upon young women and girls who are learning for the first time what prison life is like. I would say to hon. Members that when they passed the Crimes Bill they should have known what was before them, and that they should not have let go of it until they had measured the possibility of a great number of citizens coming under its operation. We hear to-night that 26 or 27 respectable men, who have never before been charged with crime, are to come under the operation of this law. One of them is the brother of my hon. Friend the Member for South Leitrim (Mr. Hayden), and the others are men of position. I have the pleasure of being acquainted with some of them. Whatever else may be said about them, they are men who have never been charged with the foul crimes that bring the barbarous punishment that I have been endeavouring to describe, and yet they are to be treated in this way. I see over the way an hon. and gallant Gentleman who is on the move as if he wanted to say something upon this matter. I will just refer to what he knows to be the case. The Visiting Justices, who go to these prisons from time to time to make inquiries, and to see how the prisoners are treated, cannot, of course, be kept out of the gaols. But if they visited the political prisoners they would only be accused of doing so in order to enjoy the fun of seeing their former opponents in prison. I will pay this compliment to the Visiting Justices of Kerry, who are opposed to me in politics, that they had the fair play and the manliness to refrain from coming to see me dressed up in the way I have described, and performing the menial functions of the prison. I think it was to their credit, and I thank them for it. It would not be a very pleasant thing for us to be visited by one of these Visiting Justices, and to have him smoking his cigar and watching you emptying your slops into the cess-pool. But then, if they do not come there is no one to protect the prisoners against arbitrary and unlawful conduct on the part of the gaolers. In average cases, when Prison Inspectors come round — and this is a matter to which some statesman will have to give his mind at some time —they simply thrust open the door of the cell, say, "Well, prisoner," without allowing the prisoner time to realize who they are, and then go away. How can these people, who are suffering these tortures and indignities, have ready on their lips, when no announcement has been made to them of the coming of the Visiting Magistrates, any charges which might be formulated against their warders? To be sure, the better educated among the prisoners might have a whole budget of these things to bring forward, and they could tell the Justices their complaints. But what is the good of it? We do not want to tell them. We want to be more manly than that. We do not like to sit at the pillar of the gate and expose our sore legs to the public gaze. I should not like to do that; and I should not have referred to these matters at all, but that I look on the speech which has just been delivered by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland as the most heartless and frigid announcement I ever heard. Perhaps I am not right in making a charge of heartlessness against the right hon. Gentleman. Perhaps, if he went over to Ireland and saw these things for himself, even he would alter his mind with regard to them. But then the mischief would have been done, and redress would be hopeless. If the Government would consent to give orders to intelligent and fair-minded men from England to visit the Irish gaols to see the class of men who are imprisoned, to see how they are treated, to bear in mind that they are being dealt with under a needless and exceptional law, which makes new crimes and attaches to them a barbarous system of punishment, I think that the public opinion of England would sweep from power the men who are responsible for what is taking place. I fear I have troubled the Committee too long upon this subject, but I should like to say a few words more. What I have been saying has been wrung from me, and dictated solely by the view that you should have some consideration and some commiseration for the class of people who have never seen the inside of a prison before, and that you should not treat them as ordinary prisoners are treated. I think I have shown that these people are punished five times as much as the class of men who habituate gaols. When I was in prison, and was in the exercise yard, there was nothing but a cold and cheerless shed in which to shelter from the rain, and there I had to stand, almost famished, and in clothes that did not fit. Next door to me was a prisoner who was undergoing his twenty-fifth term of imprisonment, and he had a rousing fire because he was a tinker. I almost blamed my father for not making a tinker of me. The fact is that the ruffian and the pickpocket manages to get the soft treatment in gaol, whilst the man who was never intended for gaol, or for association with criminals, comes off the worst. I think the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, even though he has given his answer—and, of course, after the step the Government have taken no other answer was to be expected from him—will do well to exercise a wise discretion in this matter. Believe me that if he does not this country and the world will hear of the consequences.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Sir, I consider the answer of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) to be quite worthy of the despotic and brutal policy of which he is the mouthpiece. I do not think there was ever a policy more despicable and more brutal than that of endeavouring to stifle political opponents by giving them six months' imprisonment with hard labour. In all the annals of coercionist ministries there never was a record so brutal and so horrible as that of Her Majesty's present Government. What does the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary say? He gave us an undertaking to look into this question, and the result of his far-sighted and elaborate investigation is that the rules of prisons are the same in England as in Ireland. That was not the question we asked him to consider. We asked him whether his was alone amongst European Ministries, excepting that of Russia, in treating political opponents in this way? There s not a Minister in any European country, except Russia, that would have the courage to stand up before a deliberative Assembly and declare that starvation and solitude and every instrument available for maddening and murdering prisoners should be used against political opponents. This is a question on which I have often had to speak in this House, and it is a question on which I feel most deeply. I can tell the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that men like him, language like his, conduct like his, have done more to produce dynamitards than the most reckless agitation or than the most violent journalism. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman will be ready to denounce the conduct of his Predecessors in Office, just as, five years hence, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman to-night will be marked out for infamy, as showing the last shameful stage which the Government have reached in this matter. What is the history of the action taken by the right hon. Gentleman's Predecessors on this subject? In 1865 the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, and numbers of men were put in prison in all parts of Ireland. Of those men a considerable percentage went out of prison lunatics. [*Laughter.*] That seems to extremely amuse the hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex (Mr. Brookfield). I wish he would have the courage to give articulate expression to his sentiments, instead of taking refuge in murmurs when a Member is talking of matters that ought to bring the blush of shame to his face. A large number of these men, I say, were lunatics when they left prison, a large number sought refuge in a suicide's grave from the miseries inflicted on mind and body by the Government, and the only man in America that I ever heard express himself in favour of the policy of dynamite was a man who for seven years had been tortured in prison in Ireland. These are the things, and not any speeches, or any acts, or any silence of ours, that have created the terrible condition of affairs which has been alarming mankind during the last few years. And yet, in face of these facts, up gets the right hon. Gentleman, in a manner which I should be un-Parliamentary if I described as I think it ought to be described, and, in his airiest style, says that offences of this kind are ordinary offences, which existed before the Act was passed. Is there a man in the country who will be deceived by language like that, and who does not know that this is an Act directed against political opponents? Such language deceives no man outside of this House. I do not know that it deceives even the right hon. Gentleman himself. Is there any other country but Russia—and I always except Russia—that makes no distinction between the ordinary criminal and the political opponent? I am old enough to remember the great outcry made by the Liberal and Conservative Press of this country over the despotism of the Third Napoleon, and how France was commiserated because she had not the benefit of a free Press and a free Parliament. Napoleon III. was a despot; but, under his rule, there never were practised in France such cruelties and brutalities as are now inflicted on political opponents in Ireland. M. Rochfort was put in prison for having made war upon the Government of the Emperor Napoleon with a vigour, and I might almost say a savagery, unprecedented in the annals of the country. And the despot Napoleon, with all the forces of France at his back, with a fettered Press and an enslaved Parliament—did he make M. Rochfort pick oakum or sleep upon a plank bed? No; he did what every decent despot and almost every civilized statesman would do; he treated him like a political prisoner, and M. Rochfort was allowed, when in prison, to edit his paper, to see his friends, to order his dinner to be sent to him from any restaurant he liked; and, indeed, except that he had not his liberty, he was allowed to occupy exactly the same position as before his arrest. Compare that with the despotism which you exercise in Ireland, where you are starving and torturing and driving into madness your political opponents. I do not know any page in political history that is so bloody as that which records your treatment of political opponents in Ireland. And yet we see hon. Gentlemen opposite who were elected to this House on the cry of equality for Ireland. [Mr. BROOKFIELD dissented.] The hon. Member for the Rye Division of Sussex shakes his head. I dare say he was unpledged on the point; but I say that, with the exception of two or three men—and that is the most I can allow, for I have read all your addresses to your constituents at the General Election—there is not a single Member sitting opposite who did not gain his seat in this House by telling his constituents that he was in favour of absolutely equal rights for Irishmen and Englishmen. And do you call it carrying out that pledge to say that because a man happens to be of a different political opinion from yourselves, because he is opposed to your system of Government, he is to be treated as no political offender is treated in any country except in Russia? I do not know that a political prisoner is treated, even in Russia, as badly as he is treated in Ireland. I do not join in the generous language used by my hon. Friend the Member for West Kerry (Mr. Edward Harrington) with regard to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and I do wish the day might come when I could give the right hon. Gentleman the six months' imprisonment which he is giving to many a braver and many a better man in Ireland.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): Mr. Courtney, I am bound to say that I think the eloquent speech which we have just listened to, and the experiences which my hon. Friend the Member for West Kerry (Mr. Edward Harrington) stated to the Committee just now, should make a deep impression, I do not say upon the Committee, because I apprehend that hon. Members opposite are far beyond being impressed by anything that can be said on this side of the House, but upon those who read of them. I believe that those speeches, if it were not too late for any report of them to get to the outer world, and the proceedings within these walls to-night, would make a deep impression on the mind and the conscience of the people of England. And though it may be very painful to Gentlemen like my hon. Friend the Member for West Kerry to recount the dreadful experiences they have endured to their friends and supporters in this country, I do hope that they will be nerved by the importance of the subject to that effort, and that they will make these horrible stories ring throughout the country to such an extent as shall shake this miserable Government to its foundations, both in England and Ireland. I am almost amazed at the audacity of some of the utterances that have proceeded from the Treasury Bench. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) gets up and talks in sanctified tones about no new crimes being invented under this Act. I will not characterize that statement; but the country knows how to characterize it. Although the right hon. Gentleman may, perhaps, delude himself into the belief that he is telling the truth, it is perfectly notorious throughout the country that it is for a new crime that my hon. Friend the Member for North-East Cork (Mr. William O'Brien) is being prosecuted, and will, in all probability, be consigned to the horrors of that gaol life which has been just described so graphically. It is perfectly certain that it is a new crime; and when the right hon. Gentleman tells us that the acts which my hon. Friend has committed, and which have brought him to this pass, are acts that ought to be, and always have been, punished under the Statute Law of this country, I will not say that is untrue, because that would be un-Parliamentary, but I will say that it is a statement which will not be accepted by those, both in this House and in the country, who know what has been going on in Parliament. What has been done in the case of those 26 men whose prosecution we have heard of this evening? What has been done in the case of the brother of the hon. Member for South Leitrim (Mr. Hayden), of whose arrest we have been informed to-day? Will the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary get up and state as the truth that these gentlemen have been guilty of crimes for which they deserve to be ranked as common criminals, and punished like pickpockets, or men who commit rape and every other crime in this City? [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite may laugh now; but the time will come when the laugh will be on the other side. Will the hon. Member opposite have the audacity to get up and say that these gentlemen have committed a single offence for which, if they had been in this country, they could have been made to suffer in this country's laws, which you pretend, falsely, are equal?

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I rise, Sir, to a point of Order. I want to know if it is in Order for the hon. Member to discuss a question already discussed under a former Vote?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is advanced as an illustration of what is supposed to be the discipline in the prisons. I think it is not out of Order; but the hon. Member is, in my opinion, allowing himself great latitude, and is somewhat abusing the privileges of debate as well as the patience of the Committee.

MR. CONYBEARE: I hardly think the Committee has shown any patience, so I can scarcely be said to be abusing it. With respect to the interruption of the hon. and gallant Member opposite, I was not commenting on the crime for which these gentlemen had been arrested and prosecuted—I was merely employing it as an illustration, in order to traverse the assertion of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He says he is making inquiries into this matter. He looked into these prisons himself. Has he taken the trouble to ascertain for himself what is the condition of things there, and what is the treatment to which political prisoners are so cruelly subjected? Has he taken the trouble to ascertain for himself a single one of these facts so vividly placed before us by the hon. Member? I suppose that when he gets away from the trammels of business in this House he will go and look into these matters. Well, whether or not he does, we will take care that there shall be men in this country and in Ireland who will act as a vigilance committee, who will see what is the condition of your gaols, who will see what the treatment of political prisoners is, and who will let the people of England know of this consummate tyranny. [*Ironical cheers.*] You may cheer ironically at that; but I am in the habit of addressing public and not packed meetings, and I know what we can do. I know what the feeling of the people on this subject is, and if we do not make the whole country ring with our denunciations it will not be for want of effort on our part. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite who laugh will not trouble themselves about anything but their own comfort. They are but smug-faced Pharisees——

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already reproved the hon. Member for allowing himself so much latitude. I must ask him to be a little more careful in the language he uses.

MR. CONYBEARE: I was not aware that I had used any language objectionable to hon. Members; but if you ask me to withdraw the expression I will do so. I was commenting on the indifference with which a great many Members of the House treat these things and these statements by men who have experienced these horrors—horrors enough to make any man shudder. The British people have not yet been stung into action upon them, but I hope soon that they will be. I think it is a pity the Representatives of the people do not take more interest in these matters, which are of supreme importance. These diabolical laws, so far from promoting the cause of law and order which you are always prating about, are rebel-making laws which drive men into despair. I hope the time will come when the whole nation will rebel against such a dastardly state of things.

MR. T. M. HEALY: When the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) came out of prison I wanted him to tell the story of his treatment, and I suggested that he should take an opportunity of doing so when the Princess of Wales and a number of Duchesses and Countesses and all your fine ladies were in the Gallery, and say how the Government of the country made him blow his nose with his fingers, and, while the Governor's daughters were watching him through opera classes, carry the slops from his cell in a bucket to empty them into the cesspool. So far as my experience goes, I have nothing whatever to complain of against the Government of their treatment of me in prison; but I say, and with regret, that in my opinion there is no retribution which these men could visit on their enemies that could be sufficient. They are going to put them in gaol by the score, and I declare before Heaven that if I were put into gaol like my hon. Friend, and compelled to do the tasks which he was compelled to do, I would save up a bucket of the slops, carry it across the floor of this House, and fling it in the face of the Irish Secretary as he sat on that Bench.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Member must be aware that he is quite out of Order in using such language. I call on him to withdraw it.

Mr. T. M. HEALY not complying——

Mr. DE LISLE (Leicestershire, Mid): I beg to say, Sir——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I call on the hon. and learned Member for North Longford to withdraw the expression he used.

Mr. T. M. HEALY: I say that the fact that these things have been committed induced me to use language which if it is language I ought not to have used I regret. But I do say that you are manufacturing men by the thousand who will be opposed to you. You are modelling them on your own models. Fancy depriving a man of a pocket-handkerchief for an entire month, and compelling them to such hideous degradation! Can you expect to make patriots in that way? If it had been done to me, I would have waited until the Princess of Wales was in the Gallery and then made a statement about it. Aye; if you do it, why should we not tell you about it? I say, Sir, that the callousness of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland may be in the end the best thing for the Irish people. We have told you what is going to take place; we have warned you what we will do, and I will raise up my voice no more against it. Let the result be on your heads. When I see my poor friend—William O'Brien—in his prison dress walking between convicts and subjected to such treatment as I have described, I pray God that the time may come for his release, for he will have 1,000,000 friends here and in Ireland who will be revenged for your horrible despotism.

Mr. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I wish to ask a question with regard to the escort of prisoners in Ireland. It appears it is customary to send prisoners to gaol, although only, perhaps, for a short term of imprisonment, for offences such as drunkenness; it is deemed necessary to have a large escort of police. I wish to ask whether or not some cheaper mode could be arranged? I should also like to know if prisoners when released have anything given them to pay their fares home? No doubt it is necessary that the prisoners should have no chance of escaping while being sent to prison; but I am told that never less than half-a-dozen constables are sent as an escort even for a small number of prisoners. It seems to me that thereby much unnecessary expense is incurred.

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY for IRELAND (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): The question of the escort of prisoners has very often been brought before Grand Juries. I can promise that attention shall be given to the matter with a view to reducing the expense.

Mr. BIGGAR: Is the expense paid out of this Vote or by the Local Authorities?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: The Local Authorities have to pay their share.

Mr. BIGGAR: Now, with regard to the return expenses. Do the prisoners have to return home at their own expense, or do they have some of it allowed them?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I am afraid I cannot give an exact answer to that. The allowances differ according to the train the men travel by.

Mr. BIGGAR: I will ask the right hon. and gallant Gentleman to make inquiries between now and the Report stage. I think it is in his power to do so.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I am afraid I cannot get any further information on this point before the Report stage.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, N.): After the eloquent speeches we have heard from this Bench with reference to the treatment of political prisoners in Irish prisons I do not feel called upon to deal further with that subject; but I should like to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to a case which has been brought under my notice—that of a prisoner confined in Dundalk Prison by order of a County Court Judge for refusing to sign some document. I should like to know what are the powers of Judges in connection with these matters. In this case I have heard——

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That is not a question which can be discussed on this Vote at all. The powers of a Judge cannot be discussed on this Vote.

MR. NOLAN: If I am permitted to do so, I should like to ask if there is any chance of this man being released from prison? Is there any way by which he can be discharged? He is a man who has been 30 years in America, and since then he has been a number of years working upon the farm in Ireland on which he invested his savings; and I think it is a hard thing if he is to be kept in prison for a much longer time. I remember a case in which a woman was kept in prison six or seven years, because her friends had gone away to America, and she was forgotten. She has only recently been released.

Vote *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [1st September] *reported.*

First Five Resolutions *agreed to.*

Sixth Resolution read a second time.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Longford, N.): I understood the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury to promise to reduce this Vote by £3,000.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I made no promise to the House to that effect. I would point out to the hon. and learned Member that it is not by any means necessary to reduce the Vote. The money cannot be expended for any other purpose.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I do not agree with that. Last year a sum of £3,000 was spent for certain decorations in connection with the Prince of Wales's visit. My objection is that the saving on this particular Vote may be used for other purposes. My impression is that last night a pledge was given to lessen the Vote by the sum of £3,000. If that is not the general impression of the Committee I will withdraw my opposition.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): A most distinct assurance was given us by the Government last night that this amount would be withdrawn if the Bill to which it applied was not proceeded with. I take it it was as distinct an assurance as is possible.

MR. JACKSON: I can only speak again with the indulgence of the House. I will point out that the suggestion that the money may be devoted to other purposes is absolutely impossible. The money voted for a special purpose in one Vote cannot be devoted to any other purpose; and therefore the hon. and learned Member's object in preventing it being thus appropriated is attained.

MR. BIGGAR (Cavan, W.): I speak with a very clear recollection of what took place. I say that pledge was given. I beg to move that the Vote be reduced by a sum of £3,000.

MR. JACKSON: Very well; we will do that. I will myself propose it.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£114,662," in order to insert "£111,662."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

Question, "That '£114,662' stand part of the Resolution," put, and *negatived.*

£111,662 *inserted.*

Resolution, as amended, *agreed to.*

CHARITY COMMISSIONERS (OFFICERS) BILL.—[BILL 362.]

(*Mr. Jackson, Mr. William Henry Smith.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

New Clause—

(Appointment of working-men Assistant Commissioners.)

"One at least in every three of the Assistant Commissioners to be appointed under this Act shall be selected from the working classes. And, upon any vacancy arising, due notice thereof shall be advertised in *The London Gazette*,"—(*Mr. Conybeare,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I do not want to detain the Committee long; but I should like to take the opportunity of saying a few words in moving that this new clause be read a second time. I do not for one moment suppose, after what was said the other evening, that the Government will be able to meet me, or to accept my Amendment; but I intend to emphasize the point I have taken up by going to a

Division. I can only say in reference to the object of the Amendment, and to the action of the Government in opposing the appointment of Assistant Commissioners taken from the working classes, that to say you cannot find working men qualified to perform these duties is a most hollow and unfounded contention. I need only point to the fact that there are in this House hon. Members who belong to the working classes—men who have been trained in mines and in quarries, and from other ranks where they have to earn their own living by the toil of their hands rather than that of their brains; and these facts alone show how absurd it is for anybody to get up and say that you cannot find in the ranks of the working classes men qualified to perform the clerical functions of these Assistant Commissioners. It is said that they will have to decipher all Statutes and old legal documents, or what not; but that fact need not interfere with their appointment, for the very good reason that the law requires that the two principal Commissioners should in any case be barristers of a certain standing versed in the law. I maintain—without troubling the House with any further words—that in the interests of those to whom these endowments properly belong, and from whom they have been wrongfully taken for years past, it is essential that there should be men placed in a position in which they can, to a certain extent, control and check new schemes which are calculated to continue this system of the spoliation of the poor of this country; and it is for that reason I must insist on pressing this clause to a Division.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): Notwithstanding the judgment passed by the hon. Member, that my argument against his Motion is absurd, I feel compelled to address to the House a few words in order to explain why it is simply impossible to recognize such a principle as the hon. Member suggests, even assuming we know what he means by the working classes. As to the duties these Assistant Commissioners will have to perform—they will have to go into different districts to hold legal inquiries—they will have to perform judicial functions. I have had considerable experience of these inquiries; I have had to deal with several; the opposite parties are frequently represented by advocates, between whom the Assistant Commissioner will have to decide; and it will also be necessary for him to preside at local public meetings, at which by no means unanimity of opinion exists as to what is to be done, or as to whether the charities have been improperly dealt with in the past. Then, to be able to properly fulfil his duties, the Assistant Commissioner ought certainly to have some knowledge of the Mortmain Acts, the Statute of Limitations, and other complicated pieces of legislation. I believe the hon. Gentleman objects to sinecures. I cannot imagine any appointment partaking more of that character; and I believe it would defeat entirely the objects of those who are disposed to take an interest in these matters if we make such appointments as he suggests. At the same time, I must say it is casting no slur on working men, as they would be the first to confess that they could not fulfil these duties. I hope the Committee will not accept this Amendment.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 26; Noes 94: Majority 68—(Div. List, No. 443.) [3.0 A.M.]

Mr. CONYBEARE: I will not trouble the House by moving my second Amendment; but I will move the third one that stands in my name. I do not know whether the Government will accept it; but I trust they may so far do so in principle as to suggest to the Commissioners the adoption of it in a rule. The Amendment is intended to secure the publication of a list of schemes at regular intervals, so that the public may know what is going on in connection with the different schemes relating to charitable trusts and endowments. I am led to propose the Amendment because I, or my hon. Friends interested in a particular scheme, have found it a matter of exceeding difficulty to find out what schemes are in progress, and how far the Commissioners have dealt with them. If you write to the Commissioners it is difficult to extract a satisfactory answer, and finally you find yourself too late to suggest any modification in any scheme that, for some reason or other, may be unsatisfactory. The only way at the present time in which you can get any information beyond inquiring of the Commissioners is to wade through the columns of the local newspapers, or of *The Times*, to see what schemes have been drafted — a very laborious business. Nothing would be more simple than that the Commissioners should, as part of the routine office work, publish every month in *The Gazette* a list of the schemes under consideration by them. If there is any technical reason why this should not be done, there can be no reason against the adoption of the last part of the clause. I cannot see why a list should not be kept hanging up in the office of the Commissioners, a list of the schemes in progress, so that by inspection of this list the public may ascertain for themselves what schemes are about to pass, and so on. This, I imagine, is no unreasonable demand; but if the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General cannot see his way to embody it in the Bill now before the House, perhaps he will give directions, or make the suggestion, that the Commissioners, for the convenience of the public, should adopt it as a rule.

New Clause—

(Publication of monthly list of schemes in preparation.)

"The Board shall publish, at the commencement of every month, in *The London Gazette*, a complete list of all schemes at the time being in preparation or under their consideration, and a copy of such list shall be kept posted up in the office of the Charity Commission, and shall be open to the inspection, without fee, at all reasonable times, of all persons desiring to inspect the same,"—(*Mr. Conybeare,*)

—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I should like to say something in corroboration of what has been said by the hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall. I have found the difficulty of ascertaining what schemes the Commissioners have in progress. If the latter part of the clause were accepted, I have no doubt that the public Press, or a certain section of it, would find it to its interest to gratuitously make the list public. I have known instances in Lincolnshire where parties locally interested have not had the desired information; and I hope the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General will help us to some simpler method than that which now prevails of knowing what schemes the Charity Commissioners have in progress.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I do not think this can be made the subject of statutory enactment; but I will undertake to communicate to the Commissioners what has been said by the hon. Gentlemen the Members for Camborne and Spalding. But I think the hon. Members have rather missed the point in their desire to have the information made known locally. This is already done by advertisement in local newspapers at considerable expense, and by this means I do not think there will be any real difficulty in finding out the stages of progress. The hon. Member for Camborne desires to supplement this by a monthly list in *The London Gazette.* But this is not in the ordinary sense a newspaper, and it does not come generally before the public, and a similar list at the office would not convey information to those in the particular locality concerned. The inquiry into, and consideration of, a scheme goes on often for a lengthened period. But I will make it my duty to communicate with the Charity Commissioners, and if by any means any part of the suggestion can be carried out by rule or practice of the office, I am sure they would be glad to carry it out. But it is scarcely a matter to insert in a Statute; it should be left to the discretion of the Commissioners.

MR. CONYBEARE: After this statement I shall be happy to save the House further trouble by withdrawing my Amendment. I am obliged to the hon. and learned Attorney General for so courteously promising to lay the matter before the Commissioners. If a list were hung up in the office it would, to a great extent, meet the objections I have urged.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In Clause 6, page 3, line 13, after sub-section (a), add, "(b). This repeal, so far as regards the official trustees of charitable funds, shall take effect on the date on which regulations under this Act in relation to such trustees come into operation."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

MOTION.

SITTING OF THE HOUSE (SATURDAY).

Resolved, That the sitting of the House on Saturday be held subject to the Standing Orders that regulate the Sitting of the House on Wednesdays.—(*Mr Jackson.*)

House adjourned at a quarter after Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Saturday, 3rd September, 1887.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee* —*Resolutions* [September 2] *reported.*
Public Bills — *Second Reading* — Merchant Shipping (Miscellaneous) * [348].
Considered as amended—Third Reading—Coal Mines, &c. Regulation [383], and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SUPPLY.

In reply to Sir George Campbell (Kirkcaldy, &c.),

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said, the Irish Estimates would be taken until they were concluded, and then the other Estimates in the order in which they stood upon the Paper. The Supplementary Estimates for the Classes which were not yet taken would be included in these Classes; and then any Supplementary Estimates which remained would be taken in their order after the ordinary Estimates had been voted for the Civil Service.

CRIMINAL LAW—THE CONFESSION OF ISRAEL LIPSKI.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a letter published in *The Pall Mall Gazette* of 1st September, from Mr. Hayward, who was solicitor to Lipski, the convict recently executed for murder, alleging that the fact of Lipski having prepared to write a confession in prison on the 14th ultimo was known to the Prison Authorities and to the Home Office before the announcement on the 20th of the determination of the Secretary of State that the law should take its course; and, whether there is any truth in such allegation?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): My attention has been called to this letter. There is no truth whatever in the allegation referred to, either as regards the Home Office or the Governor of Newgate.

BULGARIA—MISSION OF GENERAL ERNROTH TO SOPHIA.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) had the following Question on the Paper, but was not present when it was called:—To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the report is correct which states that the Porte has accepted the Russian proposal to send General Ernroth on a special Mission to Bulgaria; and, whether the said Mission, if undertaken, will be in accordance with the terms of the Berlin Treaty?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): As the hon. Member for Mid Cork has not found it convenient to be in his place in order to put the Question he has placed on the Paper on a matter in which he naturally takes great interest, and as it is undesirable that the Question should be allowed to remain on the Paper unanswered, I beg to say I think it is inexpedient to make any statement at present on the subject of the hon. Member's Question.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

COAL MINES, &c. REGULATION BILL.—[Bill 383.]

(*Mr. Secretary Matthews, Mr. Stuart-Wortley.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.) moved, after Clause 73, to insert the following Clause:—

"Section thirty-eight of 'The Public Health Act, 1875' (which relates to privy accommodation for any house used as a factory or building in which both sexes are employed), shall apply to the portions of a mine which are above ground, and in which girls and women are employed, in like manner as if it were herein re-enacted, with the substitution of 'those portions of the mine' for the house in the said section mentioned."

Clause (Application of 38 & 39 Vic. c. 55, s. 38,)—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews,*) —*brought up*, and read the first and second time, and *added.*

MR. HERMON-HODGE (Lancashire, Accrington), in moving the insertion of the following clause after Clause 4 :—

"Where it is proved to the satisfaction of a Secretary of State, by reason of the thinness of the seams or of any other exigencies affecting any mine or class of mines, situated in the counties of Lancaster or York, that boys between the ages of ten and twelve years should be allowed to be employed in or about any such mine or class of mines, either above or below ground, such Secretary of State may, if he think fit, by order allow the same, any provision contained in this Act to the contrary notwithstanding. Provided always, that no boy under the age of twelve years shall be so employed—(a) For more than six days in any one week; or (b) if he is employed for more than three days in any one week for more than six hours in any one day; or (c) in any other case for more than ten hours in any one day; or (d) otherwise than in accordance with the regulations hereinafter contained with respect to the employment of boys in a mine below ground,"

said, the object of the clause was to place in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department a discretionary power to allow boys known as half-timers to be employed in coal mines in the counties of Lancaster and York. That had been the law hitherto throughout all England; but in the Committee stage of the Bill the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) had moved an Amendment, which was accepted by the Committee, which would have the effect of putting a stop to the employment of boys under 12. He (Mr. Hermon-Hodge) himself had no interest in the matter; but he knew thousands of miners who were, together with their employers, unanimous in asking the House to give them the privilege of having boys under 12 years of age in the pits. Deputations from the masters and men had waited upon the Home Secretary in the matter, and Petitions had been signed by the men and also by Boards of Guardians and other public bodies in Lancashire and Yorkshire; and a general feeling existed amongst the men that the Bill, if passed in its present shape, would be little better than the death-warrant of the coal-mining industry in the thin-seam districts. The work of coal miners was carried on in different districts under circumstances, conditions, and customs, which varied as much as the dialect spoken by the men in the pits; and he believed the Home Secretary would admit that the great difficulty he had to face in framing this Bill was the impossibility of passing one hard-and-fast measure which would meet the different requirements of the different localities throughout England. This was a case of local necessity. The hon. Member for Morpeth had great influence in questions of this kind, and he hoped that he would give this matter his serious consideration. The hon. Member had recently stated that he meant "to stick to his guns" on this matter. He did not ask the hon. Member to abandon his guns, but to lay them in a different direction, and to limit the range of his artillery so that it would not touch Lancashire and Yorkshire. A very large proportion of the half-timers employed in pits worked in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Figures showed that out of the 311 boys under the age of 12 employed in mines throughout England, 308 were employed in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and only three elsewhere. The hon. Member for Morpeth might do what he liked with the three boys whom he represented in Northumberland so long as he allowed him (Mr. Hermon-Hodge) to do as he pleased with the odd 300 whom he represented in Lancashire and Yorkshire. There were many other districts where this power might have been exercised, but had not been exercised. Surely the fact that, practically speaking, all the boys under 12 were employed in this particular district to which he referred, and that no boys under that age were employed elsewhere, established *primâ facie* grounds for the belief that in other places there was no need for their employment; but in the limited district to which his clause would apply there was a necessity, and a great necessity. His whole case was based on the fact that the boys, all of them, were employed in a limited district. If the 311 boys were distributed in driblets, so to speak, all over the whole country, he should have no case to present to the House. With regard to the position of the hon. Member for Morpeth in the House, no doubt it was a delicate one, as he was the Representative of a particular class, or perhaps it would be more correct to say the Representative of a section of a particular class. The hon. Member had great influence in matters of this kind, and a correspondingly great responsibility. It was by his Amendment that the age had been raised from 10 to 12. It must be fresh in the hon. Member's mind what had taken place at the great meeting of miners held on the Saturday before Bank Holiday on Blyth Links. The hon. Member for Morpeth then said, in a speech to which he had already alluded, that he had been approached in this matter subsequent to the proceedings in Committee by a considerable number of coal owners, and also, the hon. Member for Morpeth proceeded, he was sorry to say by a number of working miners. Why the hon. Member for Morpeth should have been sorry to learn the wishes of the men on this matter from their own lips he was at a loss to imagine; it was satisfactory, however, for the House to learn that the hon. Member for Morpeth had been in direct communication with the men on this point, as it would tend to remove the impression that the men were not free to act as they pleased in the matter. He had pointed out that the coal got from the mines in his district was three feet thick or under; but that was not to be compared with the thin seams of Lancashire and Yorkshire—seams which were only two feet thick and under. This fact made all the difference in the world in the working of the coal. The hon. Member for Morpeth knew how excited miners became if they thought, rightly or wrongly, they were unjustly or unfairly treated; but all he could say was that the miners on whose behalf he spoke believed that this was a deliberate attempt on the part of those who were interested in the thick-seam coal mines to crush out those who worked in the thin-seam coal mines. [*Laughter.*] He saw hon. Members opposite smiled; but it was no laughing matter to men who feared they were about to lose their means of earning a living. He would be the last man to bring any charge of unworthy motives against hon. Members opposite; but he thought it his duty to inform them of the feeling which existed. In Northumberland, and other parts of England where these thin seams were worked, the seams were either underlaid by fire clay or surrounded by ironstone or by friable roofs; but in Lancashire and Yorkshire the thin seams were not worked in conjunction with fire clay, and the roofs were of hard shale, which it would be dangerous and expensive to remove. To work in these seams the boys must be taken young, as older boys were a size too big, and did not take kindly to the work, and the difficulty of getting them was very great. Ninety per cent of the men now working in these mines entered at the age of 10. It could not be said that the boys were overworked, because they were only underground some four and a-half or five hours daily. Apart from the thinness of the seams, there was another reason why this district should be exempt from the operation of this Bill. The pits were situated in the hills where Lancashire and Yorkshire marched, and they were surrounded on the one side by the cotton mills of Lancashire, and on the other by the worsted mills of Bradford. Half-timers at 10 years of age were allowed to work in these mills; and was it likely that when boys had been trained in them for two years they would leave at 12 years of age and go down the pits? The evidence taken before the Select Committee proved that unless the boys were allowed to enter the pits at the same age as they entered the factories, the result would be that they would go to the factories instead, and the pits would be absolutely stripped of boys. Neither could it be said that the work was injurious to boys. ["Oh, oh!"] It was only on the ground that it was injurious to the boys that the House was justified in refusing to allow their parents to send them to this particular work; yet nothing of the kind was set forth before the Committee. There was no evidence at all before the Committee showing injury to these boys beyond the merest sentimentalism, and a belief in a state of things underground which, if it had been true, would only have been an argument against the employment of boys in pits at any age. A case certainly had been mentioned in Committee of a miner whose growth had been stunted by work in the mines in his youth; but, on the other side, he might point to the hon. Member for the Wansbeck Division of Northumberland (Mr. Fenwick), the development of whose physique had certainly not been interfered with by this kind of labour, although the hon. Member had himself told the House that he was at work in the mines when he was 10 years of age. In a similar manner, he might point to the hon. Baronet on that side of the House (Sir George Elliot), who had had a corresponding experience. The health of the boys, he contended, was not injured in any shape or way. If it were, would it not at once be apparent in the way in which they did their lessons? The Report of the Education Department called especial attention to the fact that, though 50 per cent of the half-timers in England were employed in Lancashire, yet the percentage of passes in Lancashire was higher than that of any other county. From schoolmasters, from medical men, came evidence that the half-time work of boys in mines in no way checked their mental development or bodily physique, and that they would compare favourably with half-timers employed in factories. Beyond all, as having a general bearing on the coal trade generally, he argued that accidents were likely to be more frequent in mines where the men had not been properly trained; and, beginning as boys at half-time miners, they had a more complete training. When they knocked off the employment of 300 boys in a limited district, he believed the Committee acted upon imperfect acquaintance with the facts, and therefore he raised the question again. The State was now asked to undertake duties of the most onerous description, and to regulate the great industries of the country in the most minute particulars. Was it possible to suppose that the State could instantly carry out those duties, unless a certain amount of elasticity was introduced into measures of this kind? If the State was to undertake *quasi*-parental duties, it must have *quasi*-parental discretion; and it was on these grounds he asked the House to give in that limited district, that limited discretionary power to the Home Secretary. By hard-and-fast legislation, such as that to which he objected, industries might very easily be crushed out of existence, and when once they were destroyed the State could not restore them.

Clause (Employment of boys between ten and twelve years in certain cases,)—(*Mr. Hermon-Hodge,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince) said, he wished to point out that the statistics of the Registrar General showed that, even allowing for accidents, mining, compared with many other occupations, was very healthy. If a boy went down a pit, he was more likely to live than if he worked in a factory. Upon what principle, he asked, were hon. Members tabooing a particular industry by preventing boys from following the occupation of mining in Lancashire and Yorkshire, whilst, at the same time, they were driving them into the worsted and cotton mills, where the mortality returns were higher by 10 per cent than the mining mortality returns, which were below the average?

MR. BURT (Morpeth) said, he regretted that this question should be renewed again after having been so very decisively disposed of in Committee. The hon. Member (Mr. Hermon-Hodge) was within his right; but if all Members interested in any point followed his example, there would be no hope of the Bill passing. He would admit that deputations had come, and Petitions and Circulars had been sent to the House of Commons, apparently evincing a keen interest on the part of miners in favour of the proposal of the hon. Gentleman; but he had reason to believe that for the deputations and Circulars the coalowners had found the money, that they had been pulling the strings, and that the movement had not been so spontaneous as the hon. Member seemed to think. The hon. Member said that Petitions in support of the proposal had also come from Boards of Guardians; but children were apprenticed by Boards of Guardians to coalowners until they were 21 years of age, and therefore these bodies had a direct interest in the matter. The hon. Member was mistaken in thinking that in the North of England there were no thin seams; there were both thick and thin, half of the coal which was obtained in Northumberland and Durham being obtained out of coal seams which were under three feet in thickness. They had also factories on the Tyne, and yet they found they could work their thin seams without the inhumanity—for he could call it nothing else, and he urgently protested against it—of sending their young children into the mines, and so to twist and dwarf their forms to adapt them for working these thin seams. He was quite prepared to make this provision of the Bill prospective, and exempt boys now employed, so as to allow boys between 10 and 12 years of age now employed to go on, and thus give the owners time to adapt themselves to the altered circumstances; but further than that he and his friends would not go.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 40; Noes 54: Majority 14.—(Div. List, No. 444).

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid), in moving in page 4, after Clause 11, to insert the following New Clause:—

> "When the workmen employed in contract work underground in any mine to which this Act applies are dissatisfied with the hours prescribed it shall be lawful for such workmen to apply to the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of State may make a special rule for such mine, and subject to such reasonable conditions as he thinks proper, and so as to enable the workmen to be brought to the surface without unnecessary delay,"

said, that in some parts of Scotland the hours were very long, being in some instances 10 hours a-day. He understood the Home Secretary had given a verbal promise to his hon. Friend the Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs (Mr. S. Williamson) to the effect that he would be prepared to make such an order as that proposed wherever it might be found necessary. The right hon. Gentleman had shown his appreciation of the question. The discussions that had taken place had, he (Mr. Mason) believed, convinced him that such a rule might be necessary in the circumstances indicated. But while that was satisfactory so far as it went, it was possible that future Home Secretaries might not take quite the same view; and he (Mr. Mason) therefore wished to have in the Bill a provision whereby, when the Home Secretary was approached in a reasonable way, he would put such a rule in operation where necessary.

Clause (Workmen to be taken to the surface under certain conditions),—(*Mr. Mason*,)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, he was sorry he could not accept the clause in the form in which it appeared upon the Paper. It would entirely alter the mode of the special rules which rested upon arbitration, and substitute, in this particular instance, an altogether different method of arranging differences. Sections 51 and 53 provided the machinery for settling such points; and while he quite adhered to the pledge he had given to the hon. Member for the Kilmarnock Burghs, he thought the wishes of the hon. Member would be accomplished by introducing into Sections 51 and 53 additional words, by which the Home Secretary could interfere, if a rule was, in his opinion, insufficient to prevent accidents or for the safety of the miners. He would propose, therefore, to insert the words, "safety and convenience of the persons employed in the mine."

MR. MASON said, he would accept the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn*.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid), in moving to insert, in page 26, after Clause 50, the following New Clause for the establishment of an accident and insurance fund:—

> "There shall be established under this Act a fund to make provision (a) for the relatives of persons killed in the mines; (b) for workmen injured in the mines; (c) for workmen who, having been employed underground for not less than ten consecutive years, and are forty years of age or upwards, and unable, through old age or infirmity, to continue at work; such fund shall be contributed to in equal parts by (a) the workmen employed in the mines; (b) the mine owners; (c) the lessors of the minerals; and shall be administered by district committees, and elected in equal proportions by the three subscribing parties. Each such committee shall frame such rules as may be required for the proper administration of the fund within their district. Such rules and districts shall be approved by the Secretary of State. The lessor

or lessors shall contribute to the fund a percentage of the rent or royalty receivable by them; the mine owner or mine owners shall contribute a percentage of the rent or royalty payable by them; and, where the landlord works the mine, he shall contribute both the landlord's and tenant's share; the workman or workmen shall contribute a percentage of the wages earned by them, and such percentage shall be deducted by the employers and handed over to the properly appointed treasurer of the fund. No person shall be eligible to vote or have a seat on the committee who has not attained the age of twenty-one years,"

said, it was absolutely required that something should be done to provide for those who suffered, not only from the terrible accidents which every now and again occurred, but also from those smaller and almost daily occurring accidents in connection with the work of coal mining. In the recent accident in the Mid Division of Lanarkshire 73 men lost their lives, and a feeling of sympathy was aroused on behalf of those who had been left destitute through the loss of their bread-winners. They immediately set about raising a fund to make provision for the widows and fatherless children, in order that the latter might be educated and brought up in a similar way as they would have been if their fathers had been spared to them. But very great difficulty was found in getting up a fund sufficient to enable that to be done. They made an appeal to the citizens of Glasgow. The Lord Provost acted spontaneously in calling a meeting, and the citizens of Glasgow responded very readily and gave liberally to the fund. The sum calculated to be required was £18,000; but he was sorry they had not been able to obtain that sum. They had only obtained about £11,000 up to the present time. The landowners in the county where the accident took place had not, in his opinion, done their duty in connection with the contributions they made to the fund. Some of these were drawing very large sums of money from mineral rents and royalties. One of them in his (the Mid) Division of Lanarkshire was reported to be drawing £100,000 to £120,000 a-year. He was appealed to for a subscription—he was not going to name him—and he contributed the miserable sum of £50, which was altogether inadequate for the purpose they had in view. Property had its duties, as well as its privileges, and he thought it was very desirable they should endeavour to get at these parties who would not do their duty. He did not think he was asking anything very extraordinary when by his clause he proposed to compel the mining royalty receivers to contribute one-third towards a permanent accident insurance fund. They also asked that one-third should be contributed by the mineowners, and one-third by the miners themselves. He thought that would be a fair arrangement. He believed the men would be willing to go into an arrangement of that kind, which would distribute fairly the incidence of the sum which would be required for the establishment of a permanent fund for the maintenance of the people who suffered by accidents in mines. He thought if they got powers from the Secretary of State to set up a Board, elected one-third by each of the contributing parties, such Board might represent the area of a county, or a Mining Inspector's district. That seemed to him to be a fair and equitable arrangement. The men themselves, in the North of England and elsewhere, had done a great deal in the direction of providing funds. Now, he did not propose to interfere with those funds in the slightest degree, or to interfere with anything now existing; but he believed if such an arrangement as he proposed were made, it would compel reluctant and unwilling landlords who were reaping so much from royalties to contribute a fair share to the fund. It might be objected that the proposal approached to national insurance. He denied that entirely. It had nothing to do with national insurance. It simply asked those who really derived profit and benefit out of the working of a business which was profitable to all the three parties concerned to contribute. National insurance would compel parties to contribute who never derived any benefit, and many would be compelled to contribute who were not interested or connected with the matter in any way. It might also be said, and probably would be by some, "If you begin this, you may as well apply it to railway servants, and to other industries." Well, if a case was made out for applying this to other branches of work, let each be discussed on its merits; but, in this particular instance, he thought a good case had been made out for the necessity of such a fund for the benefit of those who were exposed to the constantly-recurring accidents in mines. The idea was not entirely new, so far, at all events, as mineowners were concerned. He had been handed by a right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench a letter sent to that right hon. Gentleman, which showed very clearly the benefits which might arise from such an arrangement. The writer—he would not give his name—said—

> "It is a matter of fact that for a long time I have taken a great interest in such a fund as is suggested. Some years ago I was the means of arranging a scheme between the employers and *employés* at a colliery in South Staffordshire, and in my 21 years' experience there was nothing I had greater pleasure in. Rules were arranged, and the employers contributed 25 per cent on the *employés* contributions. The employers had one-fourth in the number of the Board of Management, the remaining three-fourths being composed of the workmen. Voting and everything else was arranged on the same principle. We also did what we could to get the lessor to contribute; but we did not succeed. One invaluable advantage was that the employers or their representatives and the *employés* met periodically on common ground, in a pleasant way, and there was opportunity of which general advantage was taken to adjust questions between masters and men in a mutually satisfactory manner. The good feeling which it fostered was, I can assure you, very pleasant to witness."

It seemed to him (Mr. Mason) that if they had such a Board as that the opportunity would be given to the parties interested to meet, and many questions of dispute as to wages and other matters could be very conveniently settled by it.

Clause (Accident and insurance fund,)—(*Mr. Mason,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) said, that everybody must sympathize with the motives of the hon. Member in the proposal he had made; but he (Mr. Matthews) feared it would be impossible for the Government to accept the clause in it present shape. The hon. Member must feel that his scheme, laudable as it was, would not be workable without the addition of a great number of other clauses. Machinery for compelling these contributions, for the organization of the body which was to administer them, for giving it legal form and shape, and for enabling somebody to set about collecting contributions would have to be arranged. He did not know the number of lessors, or of mineowners, everyone of whom would be legally bound to contribute. The hon. Member for the Central Division of Glasgow (Mr. Baird) had framed a very valuable Bill, and arranged all details on this subject, that extended to four or five pages, and provided all the necessary machinery. It was obvious, unless all this machinery was supplied in this case, that the benevolent intentions of the hon. Member would fail to have any practical effect. Prince Bismarck had in Prussia introduced a scheme of this sort, but applicable not merely to coal mines, but to all dangerous occupations. If we were to embark on legislation of this kind, we ought also to include railways and other dangerous occupations. It was an extremely interesting subject to discuss; but he trusted that the hon. Member would see that they could not, at the present stage and at that late period of the Session, deal with it in a single clause.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.), in supporting the clause, said, that the hon. Member for Mid Lanark (Mr. Mason) had placed before the House the way in which he wished the scheme to be carried out, and the classes who were desired to contribute. In regard to the objection of the Home Secretary, that the clause needed other provisions to make it workable, he (Mr. Graham) presumed the right hon. Gentleman did not wish them to fight out the whole question in Scotland unaided by the advice of himself and others who had access to facts which the people living in the district did not possess. It was very evident that the mining industry was a much more dangerous industry than almost any other, not even excepting that of the railways. All the miners in Scotland whom he represented were perfectly agreed as to the advisability of the institution of such a fund as that proposed by his hon. Friend; and he hoped the clause would be pressed to a Division, in order to take the feeling of the House on that important subject.

MR. BURT (Morpeth) said, he was glad to receive the expressions of sympathy which had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary in regard to the principle of the establishment of an accident fund of this kind. As the right hon. Gentleman was aware, the miners of the North of England and elsewhere in different parts of the country were by voluntary association doing for themselves what it was proposed to do for the miners by the clause now under discussion. Many of the coalowners had acted generously—he might even say munificently—in support of these funds; but others had given nothing at all, but had contented themselves with meeting their legal obligations. He had always felt that that was not sufficient, considering the risk and danger which attended mining operations, but that all parties interested in mines should contribute in some sort to the support of the widows and orphans who were left destitute through accident. But it must not be forgotten that this was a very large and complex question. Even the hon. Member for Mid Lanarkshire, who had given great attention to the matter, had not completely matured his scheme. He simply said that a certain percentage should be contributed. But it was necessary in legislation to be more precise than that, and it was also necessary to have some machinery, which the clause did not provide, to carry out this scheme. He thought that if this subject was one for legislation—and he was not quite clear about that—it should be dealt with by a separate Bill, to which the House could, when it was before them, devote all the time and attention which the subject so eminently deserved and required. Holding these opinions he could not, of course, but concur in the expression of opinion that the hon. Member for Mid Lanarkshire would do well not to press this question to a Division on that occasion; but, of course, on that point he would exercise his own discretion.

MR. MASON said, that after the expression of opinion he had obtained from the Government, and from his hon. Friend (Mr. Burt), having no desire to imperil the Bill by prolonging the discussion, he thought he would be acting judiciously if he asked leave to withdraw the clause. He wished to state, however, that, in his opinion, the Bill framed by the hon. Member for the Central Division of Glasgow (Mr. Baird) was an utterly unworkable Bill.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) moved, after Clause 59, to insert the following clause:—

"A register of miners' agents shall be kept at the Home Office, for use by a Secretary of State and the Inspectors under this Act, whenever it may be deemed necessary or convenient to correspond with the body of miners in a district."

Clause (Register of miners' agents to be kept at Home Office,)—(*Mr. Sexton,*) —*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) said, he objected that such an obligation should not be imposed on the Home Office, unless there was a provision compelling miners' unions to send in all such names. He would promise that the Home Office would do its best to keep up such a Register.

MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) said, he thought the undertaking sufficient.

MR. SEXTON said, he would withdraw the clause.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) moved to insert the following clause, after Clause 80:—

"The provisions of this Act shall not (a) prevent a boy under the age of twelve years who before the commencement of this Act is lawfully employed in any mine below ground from continuing to be employed in a mine; nor (b) prevent a boy or girl who, before the commencement of this Act, is lawfully employed above ground in connection with any mine from continuing to be employed above ground in connection with a mine, in like manner and subject to the same provisions and regulations as before the commencement of this Act, and the provisions of the Acts repealed by this Act, with respect to the employment of such boy or girl shall continue to apply accordingly."

Clause (Temporary saving for employment of boys and girls between ten and twelve,)—(*Mr. Tomlinson,*)—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he hoped the House would see no difficulty in accepting the clause, as it would be accepted by the Government.

Mr. BURT said, he was willing to accept it as a compromise; but hon. Members had shown themselves in such a combative humour when the same point was raised earlier that he would be justified in dividing against the proposal. He would not, however, follow an evil example.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *added.*

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM (Lanark, N.W.), in moving the following New Clause :—

> "In Scotland, no workman shall be employed below ground in any mine to which this Act applies (except in cases of emergency) for a longer period than eight (8) consecutive hours, and for more than eight (8) hours in any twenty-four hours, when the mine is worked on the single shift system. The period of such employment shall be deemed to begin at the time of leaving the surface, and to end at the time of returning to the surface,"

said, he knew the clause would meet with considerable opposition; but it was a singular fact that all the Members for Lanarkshire, irrespective of Party, were agreed upon the question. The clause was framed to avoid opposition as far as possible. It was framed to apply only to Scotland, where there were 65,000 miners—men who dug the coal they talked about here—united as one man in their demand for the clause. He did not claim for one moment to represent the miners of Scotland more than any of the other Members for Scotland who had miners in their constituencies, except on this one clause; and on that he claimed to be their spokesman and to speak for them. He knew that not a single voice would be raised from the miners in Scotland to controvert or traverse one single proposal that he should lay before the House. It was said he was asking for a new thing. One would think he wished to subvert the Constitution by taking out the Mace from the Table and pawning it, or something of that sort. It was said that Parliament had never interfered with adult labour, and that this was a question which should be left to individual exertion—that the miners in Scotland were strong enough to agitate for themselves and to get what they wanted carried into law. Whether or not the miners in England were strong enough to agitate for themselves and get their wishes carried out, the miners in Scotland were not able to do so. In proof of that he would allude to the strike now going on amongst the Broxburne shale miners. Those men had lowered the hours of labour by organization. What had happened? They were now on strike, simply and solely because their employers had been able to break up their organization, and would not open the mines, unless the miners consented to work 9½ hours from bank to bank. More than that, 800 of them—120, as the Home Secretary said—were that very day being evicted from their homes. And in what condition? Anyone who knew the miners of Scotland would know the miserable condition those men were in—that little by little they had disposed of their wretched goods and chattels. He (Mr. Graham) appealed to anyone who had seen the eviction of a miner's family whether a wretched rickety table, a dirty chair, and a few pots and pans did not constitute their whole household gods? In the face of a scene like that they were to have political economy—supply and demand—and the mumbo-jumbo of books thrust down their throats. They were to sit there prating and prating, and 65,000 men who came to them in their simple faith were to go away empty-handed. He had been challenged to produce a single instance where a properly accredited body of working men had passed a resolution in favour of the Eight Hours' Movement. The Trades Unions Congress at Nottingham in 1883 unanimously passed a resolution to that effect, and the Trades Council of Glasgow in January of this year unanimously passed a similar resolution. Were those not properly accredited bodies of workmen, whose opinions went for something on this subject? But he supposed it would be said that trades unions, as a whole, had not spoken out, and given them their opinion. Far be it from him to attack trades unions; but he wished to supplement trades unionism. Where trades unionism was too weak to protect the working classes, he wished Parliament to step in and give them that protection by giving them an eight hours' day. It had been said that they would be opening the gate to other questions of a vastly wider scope by accepting this Amendment. If they did so, he for one would be glad, because he wished to see this principle applied to every trade in the country. But before sitting down he would like to say this. If they passed this eight hours' clause, and he had great hopes they would do so, it would not interfere one jot, tittle, or iota with any other district where the men had already obtained by their own exertions what he was now seeking for these miners in Scotland. The clause only fixed a maximum. It did not force the men to work up to that maximum, but, of course, it said that beyond eight hours they should not work in the mine. It was a question of great importance to the future welfare of the miners in Scotland, and if hon. Members opposite, who, he was willing to believe, were anxious to do what they could for the miners, could not vote with him, he entreated them not to vote against him, but to walk out, and not defeat those who really knew what they were talking about, and who did know something about the matter. On this question he claimed to be the practical man, and that those who disagreed with him were the academicians. The question was none of his raising. For his sins and theirs, he had been speaking lately in every mining district in Scotland, at some 63 or 64 meetings, and at every one of them a resolution was unanimously carried in favour of eight hours a-day. The miners of Scotland were looking to this House to help them in this matter, and he hoped every Member would bring a fair and unbiased judgment to bear upon the question.

Clause (Eight working hours) (Scotch Mines,)—(*Mr. Cunninghame Graham,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

MR. H. F. H. ELLIOT (Ayrshire, N.) said, he was sorry he could not agree with the hon. Gentleman's proposal, although he confessed that it was brought forward with the object of remedying evils which undoubtedly existed. No doubt, the miners of Scotland—in Ayrshire, at any rate—were in what might be called a bad way. They had to work nine and 10 hours a-day, and no one who knew anything about work in mines would say that 10 hours was a reasonable period. But he doubted very much whether he would better their position by this clause. It was framed on an entirely wrong principle. It would, he believed, be injurious to the employers; but it would most of all be injurious to the miners themselves. In his opinion, there was no more precious possession to a workman than the power to sell his labour; and it was far better that a man should, if he liked, work 10 hours and make more money than that he should work a shorter time and earn less. It was true that the hon. Member, if he did not represent all the miners of Scotland on this question, represented at least a large majority, say three-fourths, of them; yet he (Mr. Elliot) could not support the new clause, because he did not believe it to be in the interests of the men themselves that it should be adopted. What he had always told the men, and by so doing he had angered the employers, was that they should do all they possibly could to strengthen their union, and thereby make the best terms they could, and sell their labour on the best terms they could secure, but not to introduce this restriction of labour.

MR. MATTHEWS said, he hoped the discussion would not be prolonged. The matter had been thoroughly threshed out in Committe, and it was quite obvious that the Government could not on the third reading pass by a side wind what would practically amount to an Eight Hours' Act, and he therefore trusted that the clause would not be pressed.

MR. PICKARD (York, W.R., Normanton) said, he had hoped that as the clause was confined to Scotland, the right hon. Gentleman would have seen his way to accept it.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) said, the hon. Member (Mr. H. F. H. Elliot) was not representing his constituents in the matter, for he (Dr. Clark) received a number of letters from North Ayrshire miners, who were very anxious to have an eight hours' measure passed. He was glad the hon. Member had so clearly expressed his views upon the subject; but it was to be remembered that the clause was not an Eight Hours' Bill generally, but a clause that would apply to only a portion of the men. The Home Secretary must surely consider that eight hours' absence from the sunshine, eight hours in the bowels of the earth, and in a fœtid atmosphere, was quite long enough for one day for any man. It was quite possible that if the House rejected the clause, the Scotch miners, who hitherto had not been so well organized as the English miners, would organize for the purpose of enforcing its provisions by their own action; but still it would be a greater boon if the House agreed to give it them now. If the House was going to legislate in accordance with the wishes of the miners of Scotland, they would certainly pass the clause.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 24; Noes 84: Majority 60.—(Div. List, No. 445.)

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne), in moving the insertion of the following New Clause:—

"In any action by a miner for wrongful dismissal, it shall be competent for such miner, notwithstanding that he has received legal notice of dismissal, to prove that he was dismissed without just or reasonable cause, and thereupon he shall be entitled to such compensation as the court may deem fit,"

said, he would call the attention of hon. Members to a case in which a miner had been unjustly dismissed for refusing to work for 24 hours "on end." He contended that in all cases of dismissal, a workman should have the right of forcing his employer to prove that the dismissal was right and equitable, even although the ordinary notice had been given.

Clause (Compensation to miners for wrongful dismissal,)—(*Mr. Conybeare,*) —*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he was sorry he could not accept the proposal, as he considered the provisions already in the Bill were sufficient. At present, although hardship might sometimes arise, it was sufficient reason at law for a man's dismissal, that it should no longer suit an employer to keep him in his employment; but the present clause would introduce an entirely new principle—namely, that although a master acted within his legal right, he must pay compensation unless he could prove that there had been what the hon. and learned Member called "a just and reasonable cause" of dismissal. The clause would also make employment permanent, continuous, and for life, and there was no reason why a principle of that kind, if adopted, should not be extended to employments of every kind.

Mr. BURT said, the difficulty he saw in the way of the adoption of the clause was not that pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman—that if it was incorporated in the Bill, it would be necessary to extend its provisions to other employments. That, if the principle itself were sound, would not, in his opinion, be a fatal objection; but he thought on the ground of equity if an employer, after giving his workmen proper notice, was liable to have his conduct challenged, then a workman who caused his employer inconvenience by leaving his employment, although he in his turn might have given proper notice, must also be liable to have his conduct challenged. It was obvious that it would be very difficult to carry out a provision of this kind. If the House would do anything to prevent or remedy injustice or hardship, he should be very glad to see it done; but he must say that after the best consideration he had been able to give to the matter, he did not think that the clause in its present shape could be adopted by the House, and he therefore hoped that it would not be pressed.

Mr. CONYBEARE said, he was aware the clause was greatly in advance of existing legislation, and he would therefore withdraw it.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. CONYBEARE, in moving the insertion of the following New Clause:—

"No miner shall be required to take or occupy any house belonging to the mineowner as a condition of his employment, and in all cases where miners occupy houses belonging to the mineowner it shall not be competent for such owner to deduct the rent from the wages due; and every miner so occupying a house shall be entitled to one clear month's notice to quit before being ejected therefrom,"

said, he did not know whether the rumour was correct that the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary was inclined to look with some favour upon his clause if a modification was made from a month's notice to a fortnight's. At present, miners in the North of England

and in Scotland occupied cottages built by the owners, the rents of which were deducted from the wages in advance; and on the occasion of strikes, or when there was a difference, the men were at the mercy of their employers, and were liable to be turned out at a moment's notice. He had visited the miners of Scotland recently, and he had seen their miserable dwellings, not fit for pigs, far less human beings. In many cases, the condition of these villages was of the most distressing character. There was one village which he had in his mind called Paradise; but anything more opposite to one's usual idea of Paradise it was impossible to conceive. No provision was made in most of these villages for anything except the coarsest appetites and passions of the population, such as gin palaces and public-houses. There was nothing like a reading-room in many of them, and in some cases there was not even a chapel or a church. At that very time, a great many people were being evicted in connection with a strike going on in Scotland. He had a letter asking him to attend a meeting that day, and in that letter they said that after a struggle of seven or eight weeks, they were being evicted simply to force them into acceptance of their employers' terms, which were 17 per cent reduction, although the average wage was not more than 3*s.* 6*d.* per day, the abolition of the nine hours from bank to bank, and the enforcement of the condition that the men should not be allowed to combine for their mutual protection against arbitrary demands on the part of their employers. In placing this clause upon the Paper he was the spokesman of the miners of Scotland. It was not of his own motion that he had brought this matter forward; but because he had seen the misery in which the men lived, and because he had attended a large number of meetings, at which resolutions were unanimously passed on the subject; and therefore he felt it his duty to speak in their behalf in this House.

Clause (Occupation of cottage not to be a condition of hiring,)—(*Mr. Conybeare,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time."

MR. MATTHEWS said, he would admit that hardship might occur in some cases; but it seemed to him unreasonable on the other hand, that any man, because he was a miner occupying a house, should necessarily be entitled to a month's notice to quit. If he paid his rent weekly, he was entitled only to a week's notice in the same way as any other occupier who was not a miner. Hundreds of thousands of the working population of this country had only a weekly tenancy of their houses, and were liable to be turned out at a week's notice. That part of the clause, therefore, was unreasonable. Then the hon. and learned Member would not allow the rent to be deducted from the wages; but the House, when dealing with the Truck Act this Session, allowed that to be done. As to that portion of the hon. and learned Member's clause, providing that a miner should not be required to occupy a house belonging to a mine-owner as a condition of his employment, that, he thought, would be a hard and unreasonable thing to do. Therefore, while hoping that the miners in Scotland were not treated harshly in this respect by their employers, he did not think the proposed clause was a wise way of procuring relief for any hardship that might exist.

MR. PICKARD (York, W.R., Normanton) said, that this was a question which did not affect Scotland alone, because, in Yorkshire, all the mining communities were very much affected through want of freedom on the part of the colliers to reside in houses of their own choice. It was held in many quarters of the House to be a very wrong thing to eject tenants in Ireland; but, in this respect, the colliers at a great many collieries were quite as much deserving of sympathy as the Irish tenantry, for not only were the colliers obliged to take houses belonging to the colliery proprietors, and not only were the rents stopped from their wages, but they could be ejected without substantial notice. The miner ought to be allowed to live in a house the rent of which was not above his means. In some places in Yorkshire notices were issued now and then by the colliery proprietors stating that if the men did not live in their houses they should be compelled to leave their work. If anything could be done to obviate this evil, he trusted the Home Secretary would do it. There were cases of men in Yorkshire working two or two and a-half days a-week, and receiving 3*s.* 6*d.* or 6*s.* a-week, and very often when they ought to receive wages the whole amount was struck off by their employers in respect of rent for the houses they lived in. To such a condition were some miners reduced that he remembered it being said that the best dinner the miner had was a stolen turnip dinner on Sunday. If colliers could get houses to suit them at 1*s.* 6*d.*, 2*s.*, or 2*s.* 6*d.* a-week it was unfair to them to compel them to pay from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 6*s.*

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM said, he was sorry to think that Her Majesty's Government had not been able to meet the hon. and learned Member (Mr. Conybeare) half way. What the Home Secretary had pointed out with regard to miners paying their rent weekly, and being therefore entitled only to a week's notice, was all very well when the wages were paid weekly; but in some districts of Scotland, under one pretext or another, the miners were only paid once every 10 days, or every fortnight. Therefore, he claimed that the argument of the Home Secretary entitled these men to a clear fortnight's notice. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, if the hon. and learned Member for Camborne were to substitute a fortnight's notice for a month's notice in his clause, the Government would meet them half-way and accept the clause thus altered? He did not wish to charge any harshness upon the employers; but they had undoubtedly taken advantage of existing circumstances, which were not taken advantage of by the employers in Northumberland during the recent 16 weeks' strike. He hoped they would get some favourable expression of opinion from the right hon. Gentleman that the Government would meet them half-way in this matter.

Mr. MASON (Lanark, Mid) said, he thought the offer now made by the hon. Member for North-West Lanarkshire (Mr. Cunninghame Grahame) might well be accepted by the Government. He thought a fortnight's notice, at the very least, would in many instances give an opportunity for meeting the difficulties and disputes which often arose between the masters and the men. When certain action was taken for eviction it only aggravated these difficulties.

Mr. DONALD CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) also supported the suggested compromise of the hon. Member for North-West Lanarkshire. This was a matter which caused a great deal of distress in Lanarkshire. He endeavoured, when the Truck Bill was before the House this Session, to provide a remedy by a clause which he proposed; but he was not successful in that effort. The argument then used was that his clause was not very suitable for a Truck Bill, and he admitted it had some force; but it could not be advanced on the present occasion, and he hoped the Home Secretary would see his way to accept the clause modified as suggested.

Mr. CONYBEARE. Has the Government anything further to say on this matter?

Mr. MATTHEWS: Perhaps with the indulgence of the House I may be allowed to answer the question. I have only to say that the Government cannot accept the clause as modified.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Then we will divide.

Question put,

The House *divided*:—Ayes, 40; Noes, 80: Majority, 40.—(Div. List, No. 446.)

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM: I beg to move the following Clause:—

"For the better protection of workmen, and to avoid as far as possible strikes and other disturbances of labour, it shall be competent to either party to a trade dispute to apply to a stipendiary magistrate for arbitration thereon. The said stipendary magistrate shall at once notify the other party to the dispute, and invite them to appoint three persons to represent them as arbitrators, who, with three appointed by the party making the appeal, shall compose a court of arbitration, which shall be presided over by the stipendiary magistrate, or by one of his substitutes, who shall act as umpire to decide on points in which the arbitrators may differ:—(1) All expenses incurred under this section shall be assessed by the magistrate who presides, and shall be borne in such proportions as he may determine. (2) All investigations under this sections shall be held in open Court. (3) Any person who without reasonable excuse (proof whereof shall lie on him) either fails, after having had the expenses (if any) to which he is entitled tendered to him, to comply with any summons or requisition of a Court holding an investigation under this section, or prevents or impedes the Court in the execution of its duty, shall for every such offence be liable to a fine not exceeding ten pounds; and in the case of a failure to comply with a requsition for making any return or producing any document, shall be liable to a fine not exceeding ten pounds for every day that such failure continues. (4) No person shall act as arbitrator or umpire under this section, who is employed in, or in the management of, or has a pecuniary interest in the mine or mines to which the arbitration relates. (5) The appointment of arbitrators under this section shall be in writing, and notice of the appointment shall be forthwith sent to the other party to the arbitration, and shall not be revoked without the consent of that party. (6) If within twenty-one days either of the parties fails to appoint three arbitrators, the arbitrators appointed by the other party may proceed to hear and determine the matter in difference, and in that case their award shall be final. (7) The Court shall have for the purpose of the arbitration the following powers—namely:—(a) Power to enter or inspect any mine or part thereof, the entry or inspection whereof appears to the Court requisite for the purposes of the arbitration; (b) Power, by summons signed by the Court, to require the attendance of all such persons as it thinks fit to call before it and examine for the said purpose, and for that purpose to require answers or returns to such inquiries as it thinks fit to make; (c) Power to require the production of all books, papers, and documents which it considers important for the said purpose; (d) Power to adminster an oath and require any person examined to make and sign a declaration of the truth of the statements made by him in his examination; (8) The decisions of the Court shall be final and binding on all concerned after such arbitration has been held as herein provided for; and it shall not be lawful for an employer to employ workmen on any other terms than those decided on by the Court, nor can any workman sue for any remuneration other than that awarded him by such Court."

The clause is an effort on the part of the miners of the North to apply some sort of machinery whereby strikes dangerous to industry and to the workmen may be avoided. It is a system of the desirability of which the miners themselves are convinced. They have gone into the matter minutely, and their opinion is made up upon it. It may be an imperfect attempt; but still it is an attempt to do away with all those quarrels between employers and employed which have such a dangerous and damaging effect upon the coal industry. I will not labour the question, but will leave the House to decide upon it.

Clause (Provisions for arbitration,)—(*Mr. Cunninghame Graham,*)—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Clause be now read a second time"

MR. MATTHEWS said, this was, no doubt, a very interesting question; but he was afraid the Government could hardly accept the hon. Member's proposal in its present form. As it was drawn, it would call on the Stipendiary Magistrates to become the managers of collieries in their district; because it applied to any trade dispute whatever, in which if there were disagreement between the arbitrators, the Stipendiary Magistrate should be called upon to decide. The providing of machinery for arbitration required more careful consideration than could be given to the subject upon this clause.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM said, he had no wish to waste the time of the House, but he wished to have the question ventilated. He was glad the Government did not express an absolutely adverse opinion, and he thought it would be advantageous if they were to hear the views of some of the miners' Representatives on the subject.

MR. BURT stated that in principle he was entirely in accord with his hon. Friend who had appealed to him. In the North of England, as was pretty well known, the miners had always advocated arbitration. Strikes were discreditable both to employers and workmen, or to the parties, whoever they were that were responsible for causing them; at the same time, he did not think that, at the present moment at any rate, it would be practicable to adopt a system of compulsory arbitration—and with out compulsion it was no use having such a principle embodied in an Act of Parliament. He did not think the colliers in the North of England would like to be compelled in all cases to go to arbitration. Whilst in favour of the principle of arbitration, and disposed to advocate it to the utmost extent in the place of strikes, he did not think the time had yet come to make it a subject for legislation.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause (Accident and insurance fund).

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM said, he would not move the clause, as it had already formed the subject of discussion.

Clause 12 (Payment of persons employed in mines by weight).

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 36, after the word "shall," to insert the words "unless the mine is exempted by order of a Secretary of State."—(*Mr. Barnes.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 37, to leave out from the word "weight," to the word "accordingly," in line 38, both inclusive, in order to insert the words "Actual weight gotten by them of the mineral contracted to be gotton, and the mineral gotten by them shall be truly weighed at a place as near to the pit mouth as is reasonably practicable."—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Mr. BURT said, he and those associated with him preferred the clause in its original form. He was sorry that a full explanation had not been vouchsafed on the Amendment. Not having had time to fully consider them, he was not prepared to express a definite opinion on the many Amendments introduced by the Home Secretary, and he should prefer to take a Division against one in order to record his protest, leaving it to the Government to carry them on their own responsibility.

Mr. MATTHEWS said, the Amendments he had placed on the Paper to Clauses 12 and 13 were the only ones he had put down, except such as were suggested in the course of the proceedings in Committee. The Amendment now before the House, and some consequential Amendments, were intended to meet the decision given by the Court of Queen's Bench in the case of the Netherseal Coal Company. That decision was a most startling one. It amounted to this, that every ounce of mineral, whatever it were—coal, stone, or anything else got out of the mine—must be paid for, unless the deductions from that gross amount were ascertained by the banksman and the checkweigher both being present, and that, for instance, any ascertainment of the deduction by "Billy Fairplay" would be of no avail at all if the checkweigher was not present; so that the owner was liable to pay for half a ton of stone brought up with half a ton of coal. That was a result so unjust that he could not allow the Bill to pass with those defects in it. The changes he proposed to introduce were to this effect. He provided that the deductions might be ascertained in three ways. First, by any special mode that might be agreed on between the owner and the men. That let in all such arrangements as the use of a "Billy Fairplay," and the establishment of a certain average percentage for dirt, stones, and so on. Secondly, he provided that the workmen might, if they thought fit, have a separate checkweigher on the spot to determine the deductions together with the banksman or representative of the owner; and, lastly, if the workmen did not care to appoint a checkweigher, or if that checkweigher was culpably absent, then the banksman or man appointed by the owner was empowered to go on alone and determine the deductions. He had endeavoured to protect the interests both of the owner and of the men. The deductions would, he thought, be fairly made under the plan which he proposed. Of course no one would wish that an owner should be compelled to pay for stone as if it were coal. He very much regretted to have to introduce the Amendment on the Report stage; but, in view of the decision to which he had referred, he felt he would be very much to blame if he did not attempt to clear up the point.

Mr. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) asked if the decision referred to was not based on the fact that the "Billy Fairplay" was situated 40 yards from where the checkweigher was, and he therefore could not superintend the operation?

Mr. BARNES (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) said, he thought the Amendment reasonable, and hoped that after the explanation of the Home Secretary, which must be held to be satisfactory, the opposition would be withdrawn.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) expressed his obligations to the Home Secretary for the trouble he had taken in the interests of the workmen, and regretted that as the matter was one of vital importance to the men, he and his Friends would be obliged to divide the House.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM, at the request of the men of South Staffordshire, hoped that the hon. Member would divide the House

Sir JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle) regretted that the hon. Member felt it necessary to take the sense of the House on the matter. He would point out that it was not a hard-and-fast law which was proposed, but one that could be amended in case of necessity. He thought it would be better to leave the matter in the hands of the Home Secretary. He himself had not as yet had time to consider the effect of the Amendment; but he should support it, feeling sure that the right hon. Gentleman had only introduced it to meet a difficulty which might arise.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 43; Noes 87: Majority 44.—(Div. List, No. 447.)

Question,

"That the words 'Actual weight gotten by them of the mineral contracted to be gotten, and the mineral gotten by them shall be truly weighed at a place as near to the pit mouth as is reasonably practicable,' be there inserted,"

—put, and *agreed to*.

MR. HERMON-HODGE (Lancashire, Accrington), in moving, in page 5, line 11, to insert the following sub-section:—

"Where it is proved to the satisfaction of a Secretary of State, in the case of any mine or class of mines, to be expedient that the persons employed therein should, upon the joint representation of the owner or owners of any such mine or class of mines and the said persons, be paid by any method other than that provided by this Act, such Secretary of State may, if he think fit, by order allow the same, either without conditions or during the time and on the conditions specified in the order,"

said, there were many localities in which the men were now paid by measure and were satisfied. Why should the House step into a district where masters and men were satisfied with the basis upon which wages were paid and force upon them a system which they did not want? This alteration was in the interest of small collieries, which ought not to be saddled with the expense of providing weighing machinery and a check weigher.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 11, after the word "other," to insert the words "where it is proved to the satisfaction of a Secretary of State, in the case of any mine or class of mines, to be expedient that the persons employed therein should, upon the joint representation of the owner or owners of any such mine or class of mines, and the said persons be paid by any method other than that provided by this Act, such Secretary of State may, if he think fit, by order allow the same either without conditions or during the time and on the conditions specified in the order."—(*Mr. Hermon-Hodge.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. MATTHEWS said, he should support his hon. Friend's Amendment. He would give one instance. A colliery owner had written to him, saying that he had a colliery which he kept open simply for the purpose of supplying coal for a pumping machine, and asking whether he must have a weighing machine, merely in order to ascertain the pay of the one or two colliers who got the coal. He (Mr. Matthews) thought the clause would apply only to a few cases such as this, and would thus avoid instances of hardship.

MR. FENWICK thought this was rather an ingenious way of inserting an Amendment which had already been negatived by the House, and stood in the name of the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson), but which he was not in his place to move when it was called. He (Mr. Fenwick) had a most decided objection to the House being asked to leave it optional on the part of the employers and employed to say how they would pay and be paid. In every mine, a man should be paid according to the actual amounts of mineral which was got out of it, but if this Amendment were agreed to, it would simply enable the Home Secretary to exempt any colliery he thought fit from paying by weight. There was nothing in the proposed sub-section to confine the change to small collieries, and, that being so, he had no doubt they would have large collieries exempted from the provisions of the Bill as well as small ones, if the proposal of the hon. Gentleman was agreed to. He sincerely hoped the House would reject the Amendment, notwithstanding the fact that the Home Secretary had accepted it.

MR. TOMLINSON (Preston) said, he was accidentally absent when his Amendment was called; but he did not think it was necessary for giving effect to the present Amendment, and he hoped the House would support it. Last night, he was met by a deputation of miners, representing a district where there was a number of small mines, and they expressed a unanimous opinion in favour of a proposal of this kind.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) said, he felt it to be his imperative duty to oppose every attempt made in that House not to have the mineral obtained from collieries strictly weighed. He took up a strong position against a similar Amendment when the Bill was in Committee, and he must do so again now. There were small collieries which might benefit by the proposed change, and perhaps, if the present Home Secretary remained in Office always, the sub-section would do no harm, as no other than small collieries would be allowed to avail themselves of it. But the right hon. Gentleman had not got a permanent lease of the Office of Home Secretary, and they did not know who might succeed him. What was known was this, that, previously, collieries employing as many as 500 or 600 men had been exempted from legislation, because the owners had sent round and asked the men to consent to their views. The men were prevented from meeting together, and, as a result, they had been induced to consent to agree to things which they never would have done had they been allowed to assemble together. He hoped the House would not fall back and enable a vicious system to be practised, which, however, would be the case if the Amendment were accepted.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he entirely repudiated the suggestion of the hon. Member (Mr. W. Abraham), that the colliers of England and Wales were not free. There was all the difference in the world between the Home Secretary giving in exemption in so many words, and doing so on the joint representation of the masters and men. He thought they were perfectly competent to fight their own battle, and that they would not agree to a joint representation under this clause unless their interests were well served. It would be going too far to prevent mineowners and colliers coming to an agreement if they desired to do so.

Mr. BURT said, if the proposal had simply been to exempt small collieries and small mines, employing say 30 men, he should not have objected to it. But it had been brought forward in a plausible form which struck a blow at the system of weighing generally, and therefore he was bound to oppose it to the utmost of his power. The hon. Baronet the Member for the Barnard Castle Division of Durham (Sir Joseph Pease) had said that the laws of England were not like those of the Medes and Persians, and were capable of being amended in the future. But if the proposal of the hon. Member for the Accrington Division of Lancashire (Mr. Hermon-Hodge) was adopted, and the Bill became law—as he (Mr. Burt) hoped it would very soon do—it would not be very long before it would require alteration, because of the inclusion in it of the proposal of the hon. Member for the Accrington Division. What the miners' Representatives wanted, was that this measure should be a settlement of matters affecting them for a few years; but he assured the Home Secretary that if he accepted the Amendment in the form in which it had been proposed, it only opened the way to further agitation, and next Session a Bill would have to be brought in to amend this Act.

Mr. PICKARD said, he could not allow the clause to be passed without raising a strong protest. If the proposal of the hon. Member for the Accrington Division of Lancashire (Mr. Hermon-Hodge) was accepted, it would mean this, that every colliery owner would be able to say—"I will not have my coal weighed, if I can get my men to say they do not want to have it weighed." Did the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary, after all the trouble he had taken with the Bill, wish it to come to that? That the coal should be weighed, no matter what the colliery owners said, was the main principle of the Bill, and all he could say was that the workmen claimed the support of the colliery owners in getting a Bill passed which should, by the efficiency of its provisions, be able to be kept in operation for 10 or 15 years. But if the Home Secretary accepted the invidious and insidious clause proposed by the hon. Member for the Accrington Division, it would nullify a vital principle of the Bill, which would not then be worth the paper it was printed on.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE said, he thought it would be a pity—as the Home Secretary and his hon. Friends behind him were practically at one—if they did not come to an agreement on the point. He thought both Parties would be satisfied by the insertion in the proposed new clause, after the word "mines," the words "employing not more than twenty men underground."

MR. MATTHEWS said, he would accept the suggestion of the hon. Baronet.

Amendment amended, by inserting, after the word "mines," in line 2 of the Amendment, the words "employing not more than twenty persons underground."—(*Sir Joseph Pease.*)

Question,

"That the words 'where it is proved to the satisfaction of a Secretary of State, in the case of any mine or class of mines employing not more than twenty persons underground, to be expedient that the persons employed therein should, upon the joint representation of the owner or owners of any such mine or class of mines, and the said persons be paid by any method other than that provided by this Act, such Secretary of State may, if he think fit, by order allow the same either without conditions or during the time and on the conditions specified in the order,' be there inserted."

—put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 13 (Appointment and removal of checkweigher on part of men).

Amendments made.

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 11, after the word "weighing," to insert the words "or the determination of deductions."—(*Mr. F. S. Powell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. H. F. H. ELLIOT, in moving to amend the clause by providing that in mines—

"Where no check weigher has been appointed by the workmen, any workman whose hutch is challenged, shall have the right to be brought to the surface to verify the weight and contents of the hutch, and shall, if he desires it, be taken down again to his work."

said, that in certain mines in North Ayrshire, where there were no checkweighman, the men were allowed to come to the surface to verify the weight of the hutch; but they were not allowed to go down again into the mine, and thus they lost the remainder of their day. This was considered a great grievance, which he wished to remedy by his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, line 26, after the word "just," to insert the words, "where no check weigher has been appointed by the workmen, any workman whose hutch is challenged, shall have the right to be brought to the surface to verify the weight and contents of the hutch, and shall, if he desires it, be taken down again to his work."—(*Mr. H. F. H. Elliot.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. MATTHEWS said, he could not accept the proposal of the hon. Member, as it would not be workable. If there was a grievance in any particular mine, it could be dealt with by special rules.

MR. FENWICK said, he quite agreed with the view of the Home Secretary.

MR. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM said, the case could be met by putting aside hutches that were challenged.

MR. PICKARD said, that the practice suggested by the hon. Member (Mr. Cunninghame Graham) prevailed at some collieries, and he did not quite agree that the working of the Amendment would be impracticable.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary MATTHEWS, the following Amendment made:—In page 6, line 27, leave out sub-section (7), and insert the following sub-section:—

"(7) If the person appointed by the owner, agent, or manager to weigh the mineral impedes or interrupts the check weigher in the proper discharge of his duties, or improperly interferes with or alters the weighing machine or the tare in order to prevent a correct account being taken of the weighing and tareing, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 14 and 15 *agreed to.*

Clause 16 (Prohibition of single shafts).

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary MATTHEWS, the following Amendment made:—In page 8, line 14, to leave out from "yards" to the end of sub-section (b), and insert—

"And there shall be between such two shafts or outlets a communication not less than four feet wide and three feet high, and in the case of communications made after the commencement of this Act between shafts and outlets, not less than four feet high."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 17 *agreed to.*

Clause 18 (Exceptions from provisions as to shafts).

Other Amendments made.

MR. MATTHEWS, in moving to insert in Clause 18 the following new paragraph:—

"The foregoing provisions of this Act as to the dimensions of the communication between two shafts or outlets, shall not apply to any mine or class of mines so long as the same is exempted therefrom by order of a Secretary of

State by reason of the thinness of the seams or other exigencies affecting that mine or class of mines, and so long as the conditions (if any) annexed to the order of exemption are duly observed,"

said, that representations had been made to him that in thin seam districts, although the shafts might be a mile or more apart, the seams were so thin that in working the coal you did not get anything like a height of four feet, which was now the increased height required.

Amendment proposed,

In page 9, line 42, after the word "observed," to insert, as a new paragraph, the words,—"The foregoing provisions of this Act as to the dimensions of the communication between two shafts or outlets, shall not apply to any mine or class of mines so long as the same is exempted therefrom by order of a Secretary of State by reason of the thinness of the seams or other exigencies affecting that mine or class of mines, and so long as the conditions (if any) annexed to the order of exemption are duly observed."—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. HERMON-HODGE entirely endorsed all that had fallen from the lips of the Home Secretary, and earnestly begged the House to accept the clause which was essential to the working of the thin seamed mines in the constituency which he represented.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) said, the hon. Members upon the Government Benches spoke as if there were no thin seams except in the parts of the North of England with which they were connected. If they went down to South Wales, and saw seams there only 22 inches wide, they would acknowledge that there were thin seams somewhere else than in their district.

Mr. FENWICK said, he thought the Home Secretary would be well advised if he withdrew the Amendment. It was an entirely new Amendment, for they had no opportunity of considering it in Committee.

Mr. BARNES supported the Amendment.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 82; Noes 53: Majority 29.—(Div. List, No. 448.)

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 19 to 23, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 24 (Proceedings and powers of boards for appointing examiners).

Amendment proposed,

In page 12, line 15, after the word "Kingdom," to insert the words "and that the examinations and qualifications of applicants for second class certificates shall be suitable for practical working miners."—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. TOMLINSON said, he proposed to omit from the Amendment the words "working miners," and to insert in their place "underlookers or overmen."

Amendment proposed to the proposed Amendment, to leave out the words "working miners," and insert the words "underlookers or overmen." —(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'working miners' stand part of the proposed Amendment."

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhonnda) said he could not assent to the hon. and learned Gentleman's (Mr. Tomlinson's) proposal, as its effect would be that working miners would be excluded from the examinations.

Mr. MATTHEWS said, that all that was wanted was that only qualified men should be able to become managers or under-managers. He would, therefore, accept the Amendment of the hon. and learned Gentleman. In Committee he had promised that the examination should not be such as to exclude working miners from those positions, but they ought to secure men who were likely to be qualified for the work.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM said, he presumed that the right hon. Gentleman did not mean to exclude working miners from filling the higher positions in mines, but such would be the effect of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Preston.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE said, he thought the Amendment of the Home Secretary would be better unamended.

Mr. FENWICK objected to the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman. The Amendment, as proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Preston—the words "practical working miner"—covered all that was desired by the words "underlooker or overman."

Mr. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford) said, he also took the same view as the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Fenwick).

MR. TOMLINSON said, he had no desire to exclude practical miners. All he wished was, that the men appointed managers should be fit for the responsible position of underlookers or overmen.

MR. PICKARD said, he quite agreed with his hon. Friends that by the Amendment working miners would be shut out from examination. There were many working miners who were not underlookers or overmen, but who were quite capable and prepared to pass the examination.

MR. TOMLINSON said, he would withdraw his proposed Amendment to the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment, and, in doing so, he trusted he might be allowed to explain that his only desire in moving it was that the most competent working men should be appointed to the higher positions in mines.

Amendment to the proposed Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 25 to 33, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 34 (Plan of mine to be kept at office).

MR. J. W. SIDEBOTHAM (Cheshire, Hyde), in moving an Amendment that the plan should show the workings up to a date not more than three months previously,

"or such longer period not exceeding six months as the inspector may determine, having regard to special circumstances existing at any particular mine,"

said, he did not wish to reverse the decision of the Committee; but the Amendment he now proposed had the approval of the Representatives of the mines in his constituency.

Amendment proposed,

In page 16, line 14, after the word "previously," to insert the words "or such longer period not exceeding six months as the inspector may determine, having regard to special circumstances existing at any particular mine."—(*Mr. J. W. Sidebotham.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. MATTHEWS said, the Committee agreed to "three" months, and he did not think the House would be disposed to reverse the decision arrived at.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. TOMLINSON, the following Amendments made:—In page 16, line 39, leave out "two chains to one inch," and insert "that of the Ordnance Survey of twenty-five inches to the mile."

Clause 35 (Notice to be given of accidents in mines).

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary MATTHEWS, the following Amendment made: —In page 17, line 21, leave out from "accident," to "unless," in line 23, and insert—

"Until the expiration of at least three days after the sending of such notice as aforesaid of such explosion or accident, or until the visit of the place by an inspector, whichever first happens or."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 36 to 38, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 39 (Appointment of inspectors of mines).

An Amendment made.

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary MATTHEWS, the following Amendment made: —At end of Clause, insert as a new sub-section—

"(5.) The salaries of the inspectors and the expenses incurred by them or by a Secretary of State in the execution of this Act shall continue to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 40 and 41 *agreed to.*

Clause 42 (Notice by inspector of causes of danger not expressly provided for).

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary MATTHEWS, the following Amendment made: —In page 21, line 11, leave out from beginning of line to "and," in line 16, and insert—

"If the owner, agent, or manager fail, when no objection is sent as aforesaid, to comply with the requisition of the notice within ten days after the expiration of the time for objection, or when there has been an arbitration to comply with the award within the time fixed by the award, he shall be guilty of an offence against this Act."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 43 (Annual reports of inspectors).

Amendment proposed,

In page 21, line 31, at the end of Clause 43, to insert the words,—"And where a special examination of a mine, or any portion thereof, has been made by an inspector of mines at the request of the workmen employed in such mine, the inspector shall forthwith make and forward a report of said examination to the Secretary of State."—(*Mr. Pickard.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he could not accept the Amendment, the object of which he failed to perceive. He further objected to it on the ground that it would only lead to confusion. He would, however, be quite ready to issue a general instruction to the effect of the Amendment. The Inspector made examinations for a variety of reasons, and if there was any matter of consequence connected with it, he always reported to the Secretary of State. But this proposal might lead the Inspector to believe that it was only in the special case referred to that he ought to report.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 44 *agreed to.*

Clause 45 (Formal investigation when directed by Secretary of State).

Mr. PICKARD, in the sub-section providing that the formal investigations under the clause should be heard in open Court unless otherwise directed by the Secretary of State, moved to omit the words giving the Secretary of State discretionary power in the matter.

Amendment proposed, in page 22, line 2, to leave out from "shall" to "hold."—(*Mr. Pickard.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. MATTHEWS assented to the proposal.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 46 *agreed to.*

Clause 47 (Provisions as to arbitrations).

Mr. PICKARD said, he wished to amend Sub-section 4, which stood as follows:—

"The appointment of an arbitrator under this section shall be in writing, and notice of the appointment shall be forthwith sent to the other party to the arbitration, and shall not be revoked without the consent of that party."

He wished to leave out the words "other party to the arbitration, and shall not be revoked without the consent of that party," in order to insert the words "umpire, and shall not be revoked without the consent of the umpire."

Amendment proposed,

In page 23, line 28, to leave out from the word "the" to the word "party," in line 29, and insert the words "umpire, and shall not be revoked without the consent of the umpire."—(*Mr. Pickard.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Mr. MATTHEWS said, that this was the first of a series of Amendments, the scheme of which he could not agree to. This was an arbitration between the Secretary of State on the one hand and the mineowner on the other, and the hon. Member had such confidence in the Secretary of State that he would make him appoint the umpire. Well, he (Mr. Matthews) did not think that was an arrangement which would give satisfaction to the coalowners. There were other objections to other parts of the scheme, but there was one part to which he could assent—namely, that in which the hon. Gentleman proposed that the umpire in all cases of reference should be either a County Court Judge, Stipendiary Magistrate, Recorder, or Registrar of a County Court. He was prepared to accept the latter proposal with some slight amendment.

Mr. PICKARD said, that under the circumstances he would not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary Matthews, the following Amendment made:—In page 24, leave out Sub-section 10, and insert the following Sub-section:—

"Every person who is appointed an umpire under this section shall be either a County Court Judge, Police or Stipendiary Magistrate, Recorder of a borough, or Registrar of a County Court."

Mr. DONALD CRAWFORD suggested that the word "sheriff" should be inserted with reference to Scotland.

Mr. MATTHEWS said, that would be done in the clause applying the Act to Scotland.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcestershire, Evesham) said, he wished to move an Amendment to Sub-section 7 standing in the name of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge). He explained that the section, as it at present stood, provided that in the event of an arbitrator dying or becoming incapable of acting before an award had been made, or for seven days refused or neglected to act, the party by whom such arbitrator was appointed might appoint some other person to act in his place, and if he failed to do so within seven days after notice in writing from the other party for the purpose, the remaining arbitrator might proceed to hear and determine the matter in difference, and in that case the award of the single arbitrator should be final. The Amendment was to the latter part of the sub-section, to provide that the remaining arbitrator might "act alone in the appointment of an umpire, and in hearing and determining conjointly with him the matters in difference." The Amendment would secure that the arbitrator and umpire should sit together. It would avoid the necessity of separate hearings and in that way save trouble and expense to the parties.

Amendment proposed,

> In page 24, line 1, sub-section 7, to leave out from the word "to," to end of sub-section, and insert the words "act alone in the appointment of an umpire, and in hearing and determining conjointly with him the matters in difference." —(*Sir Richard Temple.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. MATTHEWS said, it was impossible to accept both the scheme of arbitration in the Bill, with the modifications which he had already accepted as proposed by the hon. Member (Mr. Pickard), and the proposal now made by the hon. Baronet. There was one point in the hon. Baronet's Amendment, however, which might be accepted with advantage—that was to say, the proposal that the umpire should be able to sit at the same time as the arbitrator. By that arrangement they would always have a lawyer sitting on the arbitration. With that view, he had prepared the following Amendment in these words :—

> "Arrangements shall, whenever practicable, be made for the matter in difference being heard at the same time before the arbitrator and umpire."

That would be an additional sub-section which would come after Sub-section 14—as the first of the sub-sections regulating the conduct of the reference.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE said, he thought the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman perfectly satisfactory.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

> In page 24, after sub-section 14, to insert as a new sub-section—"Arrangements shall, wherever practicable, be made for the matter in difference being heard at the same time before the arbitrator and umpire."—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan) said, he saw a difficulty in the Amendment proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, on the ground that it would render it necessary for the umpire to take part in every inquiry.

MR. MATTHEWS: That, no doubt, is a disadvantage; but you must take the advantages with the disadvantages.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 48 *agreed to.*

Clause 49 (General rules).

MR. MATTHEWS said, he wished to draw attention to Rule 2 (Ventilation of mines). The rule stated—

> "Where a fire is used for ventilation, the return air, unless it it is free from inflammable gas, shall be carried off clear of the fire by means of a dumb drift or airway."

He proposed, after the word "ventilation," to insert "in any mine newly opened after the passing of this Act."

Amendment proposed,

> In page 27, line 3, after the word "ventilation," to insert the words "in any mine newly opened after the passing of this Act."—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

> In page 27, line 4, to leave out the words "unless it is free from inflammable gas," and insert the words "unless it be so diluted as not to be inflammable."—(*Mr. Secretary Matthews.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. BURT said, he thought that this Amendment would be a serious detriment to the Bill.

MR. MATTHEWS said, it was agreed in Committee that the requirements with regard to a dumb drift had been prospective only. The Amendment he was proposing would carry that out. It had appeared to him that there were no mines that were absolutely free from inflammable gas; although there were many where they contained gas, it was not in sufficient quantities to be in the slightest degree dangerous. In such cases there could be no need for the stringent regulation contained in Rule 2.

Mr. A. J. WILLIAMS (Glamorgan, S.) said, that the Royal Commission had attached the greatest importance to the words as they stood in the Bill, and he trusted the Legislature would not countenance the carrying of the return air of any kind in a colliery over a furnace.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words proposed be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Sir JOSEPH PEASE moved, in Rule 4, page 27 (relating to the inspection of a mine), an Amendment to make it clearer that no contractor for getting minerals from the mine should be qualified to make the inspection.

Mr. FENWICK said, he must insist on the importance of preventing anyone who was personally and directly interested in the working of the mine from being entitled to make the inspection of the mine, and from deciding whether it was safe or not.

Sir JOSEPH PEASE said, he would point out that the Amendment would attain that end better than the wording of the clause as it stood.

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he must insist upon his Amendment.

Amendment *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary Matthews, the following Amendments made:—In page 28, line 28, after "machinery," insert "the state of the guides and conductors in the shafts;" and, in line 12, leave out "and the guides or conductors therein."

Mr. WOODALL moved to amend the 9th rule, dealing with the construction of safety lamps, by providing that the lamp should be "provided by and be the property of the mineowner."

Amendment proposed, in page 29, line 8, after the word "used," to insert the words "they shall be provided by and be the property of the mineowner, and."—(*Mr. Woodall.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he was unable to accept the Amendment. He questioned the advisability of making a general rule in the matter.

Mr. WOODALL said, that unless some substantial reason were given for the non-acceptance of the Amendment, he should feel bound to press it. The object of the Amendment was to remove uncertainty, and to make universal what was the practice in all well-regulated mines, thereby throwing the responsibility on the mineowner.

Mr. BURT said, he was sorry the Home Secretary could not see his way to accept the Amendment, which was of the utmost importance, because a great deal of danger arose from the imperfect construction of lamps which the workmen were compelled to provide themselves with in many cases. He hoped, under these circumstances, that the Home Secretary would be able to alter his decision.

Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM said, he was surprised that the right hon. Gentleman did not realize the danger that arose from a miner supplying himself with a cheap but imperfect lamp, and thus exposing, not only his own life, but the life of every other man in the mine.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said, he thought it desirable to accept the Amendment.

Mr. MATTHEWS said, that the Bill contained provisions against the use of improper lamps, and it was not likely the danger indicated would arise. He thought that as long as they provided that a safety lamp was used, it was unnecessary to go into details as to whom it should belong. He had received several representations, including one from Mr. Woodman, the Inspector in South Wales, to the effect that the men were more careful of the lamps to see that they were in proper order when they were their own property, and that, in fact, personal possession was an element of safety, and to insert the Amendment would be rather prejudicial to it. He would remind the hon. Member (Mr. Cunninghame Graham) that it was the Inspector's duty to see that no improper lamps were taken into the mine. If the lamps did not conform to rule, if they were so constructed that they would not be safe in the swiftest current of air, then the use of such lamps would be an offence, and they would be excluded.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 51; Noes 74: Majority 23.—(Div. List, No. 449.)

Amendments made.

Mr. BURT moved that all lamps should be enclosed in cases capable of effectually preventing the gauze from being exposed to the full force of the current of air. He thought it necessary that there should be some sort of definition of what was meant by properly protected lamps.

Amendment proposed,

In page 29, line 13, after the word "lamps," to insert the words "unless they are enclosed in cases capable of effectually preventing the gauze from being exposed to the full force of the current of air."—(*Mr. Burt.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. MATTHEWS said, he could not accept the Amendment. The clause as worded met all the requirements of the hon. Member.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox), in moving the introduction of the following as a new sub-section:—

"It shall be in the power of the manager or sub-manager of such mine, or part of a mine, to direct a search to be made of any person, or of the clothes or belongings of any person, who may have entered, or who may be desirous of entering, the workings, with the view of ascertaining whether such person has in his possession, or under his control, any of the contrivances, articles, or apparatus prohibited under Sub-sections 3 and 4 hereof. Provided always, that such search shall be undertaken by the manager, sub-manager, or person appointed by such manager or sub-manager, in the presence of the person whose belongings are to be searched, and that the person so to be searched, or whose clothes or belongings are to be searched, may call a workman or other person to witness the search,"

said, the question was whether they should put sentiment before personal safety. It was a question of sentiment *versus* life and death. The Amendment was important in the interest of the workmen themselves, who were the greatest sufferers in any explosion, and he meant to go to a Division so as to determine who were in favour of the clause and who were not. He would call attention to the evidence in relation to the Udston Colliery disaster, showing that matches were found upon many of the men who lost their lives, and matches might have been the cause of the explosion. Without such a search, he did not see how it was possible to carry out the prohibitory clauses, and it was almost necessary that workmen should have the power, by informing the manager, of checking the carelessness of a fellow workman, which might endanger all their lives.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed.

In page 29, line 33, after the word "shot," to insert the following sub-section:—

"(5.) It shall be in the power of the manager or sub-manager of such mine, or part of a mine, to direct a search to be made of any person, or of the clothes or belongings of any person, who may have entered or who may be desirous of entering the workings, with the view of ascertaining whether such person has in his possession, or under his control, any of the contrivances, articles, or apparatus prohibited under sub-sections (3) and (4) hereof: Provided always, that such search shall be undertaken by the manager, sub-manager, or person appointed by such manager or sub-manager, in the presence of the person whose belongings are to be searched, and that the person so to be searched, or whose clothes or belongings are to be searched, may call a workman or other person to witness the search."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. MATTHEWS said, it would be highly desirable if, as a matter of good feeling and arrangement, men did allow a friendly overlooker to search; but he did not think it desirable to insert such a provision in the Bill.

Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince), in supporting the Amendment said, he thought it a monstrous thing that the lives of all the workers in a colliery should be at the mercy of the carelessness of one single reckless or careless man who disregarded the rule.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Other Amendments made.

Another Amendment proposed, in page 30, line 42, after the word "where," to insert the word "coal."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'coal' be there inserted."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. WOODALL moved an Amendment, with the object of exempting managers from the obligation of watering a mine when using explosives, when the latter were not of a flaming nature. When water cartridges were used, there was no danger from sparks, and there was no necessity to adopt the troublesome expedients required with powder cartridges.

Amendment proposed, in page 30, line 43, to leave out from the words "or (2)," to the word "unless," in page 31, line 1.—(*Mr. Woodall.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

MR. MATTHEWS said, he had spent hours over the Bill, seeking to find out what was and what was not indispensable, and the result was he could not accept such an Amendment. Certainly, water cartridges were most desirable things, and carefully used by an expert might, without danger, be exploded over a barrel of gunpowder. Not so, however, in the hands of a rough collier, who might jam the cartridge into a hole, letting all the water escape in the process. They ought, therefore, to persist in the provisions for watering all round the shot holes. The preponderance of opinion was in favour of that course being followed, and therefore he could not agree to the Amendment.

MR. BARNES (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) said, he must deny that the water cartridges were roughly used by inexperienced men. They were used by men whose special duty it was to fire the shots, and not a spark came from them.

MR. PICKARD said, he trusted that the Home Secretary would stand to the Bill, which was by no means stringent on the point.

MR. TOMLINSON said, to insist on the same precautions being taken with water cartridges as powder cartridges would lead to their disuse, and they were acknowledged the safest form of mining explosives.

MR. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) said, he also trusted the Home Secretary would adhere to the Bill. Experience had shown that safe as they usually might be, the water cartridge sometimes failed. Where explosions had occurred, it could be shown that fire had been stopped where the colliery was damp. He could convince anyone of the advantages of watering, if he could show him the scheme introduced in South Wales for the watering of roof, walls, and sides, which cooled the atmosphere and made work more pleasant.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. Woodall

MR. TOMLINSON moved the addition of a sub-section providing that shots might be fired in mines on the conditions contained in the following words:—

"All workmen have been removed from the seam in which the shot is to be fired, and from all seams communicating with the shaft on the same level, except the men engaged in firing the shot, and such other persons, not exceeding ten, as are necessarily employed in attending to the ventilating furnaces, steam boilers, engines, machinery, winding apparatus, signals, or horses, or in inspecting the mine."

Amendment proposed,

In page 31, line 4, at the end, to add the words "or (3) All workmen have been removed from the seam in which the shot is to be fired, and from all seams communicating with the shaft on the same level, except the men engaged in firing the shot, and such other persons, not exceeding ten, as are necessarily employed in attending to the ventilating furnaces, steam boilers, engines, machinery, winding apparatus, signals, or horses, or in inspecting the mine."—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. MATTHEWS said, his hon. and learned Friend's proposal meant in a dry and dusty mine a shot might be fired with gunpowder and without watering, on condition that not more than ten men might be killed. To such a proposal he could not assent. The removal of the men was no protection against an explosion. It only limited the disastrous effects of the explosion, and confined it to the men whom it was absolutely necessary to have present. He considered the proposal would be a most dangerous relaxation of the rule.

COLONEL BLUNDELL said, he must point out that the removal of the workmen from the mine was the safest course to take when shots were being fired. The right hon. Gentleman took upon himself the most serious responsibility if he forbade the use of that precaution.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Other Amendments made.

Rule 25 (Means of signalling for working shaft).

MR. PICKARD proposed the following Amendment:—

"Within six months after the passing of this Act, in every such shaft of any mine employing below ground at any one time fifty or more persons, the winding rope shall have attached a detaching and suspending hook or other automatic apparatus to detach the rope and suspend the cage in case of overwinding."

Amendment proposed,

In page 33, line 33, after the word "shaft" to insert the words, "Within six months after the passing of this Act, in every such shaft of any mine employing below ground at any one time fifty or more persons, the winding rope shall have attached a detaching and suspending hook or other automatic apparatus to detach the rope and suspend the cage in case of over-winding."—(*Mr. Pickard.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. HINGLEY (Worcestershire, N.): said, he thought it would not be wise to make the provision of this invention compulsory. In the Midland Counties they pulled up the men at half-speed, and they have not had an accident. It would be better to leave mineowners, workmen, and Inspectors a discretion in the matter. Moreover, the proposal was one which would not be applicable to all cases. He did not wish to say one word to detract from the merits of the detaching hook, which was a very ingenious invention, and no doubt, under some circumstances, might be the means of saving life. The apparatus was not, however, infallible, and cases had been known in which it had failed. In the old mining districts of South Staffordshire and Worcestershire there were about 1,000 pits, and at very few of them were there pits frames suitable for detaching gear. That being so, the detaching hook at those collieries would become a positive source of danger, and might result in loss of life. Personally, he should not have any objection to applying the detaching hook to the pits with which he was connected; but most of the miners were averse to it, and one which he adopted some years ago was objected to by them, and really failed in use. It must also be borne in mind that many of the mines in the Midlands were now being rapidly worked out, and the consequence was that it would not pay the owners to erect new frames in order that they might use detaching hooks.

MR. MATTHEWS said, the Royal Commissioners on Accidents in Mines had expressed the opinion that whilst the safety hooks at present available might have contributed to the prevention of accidents from over-winding, the automatic steam brake constituted a better protection. Under these circumstances, he thought that, instead of adopting the Amendment, it would be well to provide that if at any colliery there was no detaching hook, the rate of speed at which men were taken up or down a shaft should not exceed two miles an hour.

MR. FENWICK remarked that it would be a great hardship to reduce the rate of speed in some collieries where it now was as much as could be done to get out the coal at a sufficient rate. He wished to point out to the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary that these detaching and suspending hooks were already largely in use in the large and better-managed collieries of the Kingdom; and the hon. and learned Member for Preston (Mr. Tomlinson) had them at nearly the whole of his collieries. A Circular was issued in 1879 by Viscount Cross, who was then Home Secretary, in which that right hon. Gentleman drew attention to the occurrence of accidents through over-winding, and the consequent breakage of winding ropes. The right hon. Gentleman further drew the attention of mine managers and agents to the invention of the automatic apparatus, with the object of providing for the safety and the lives of working miners, and expressed a hope that the managers would give the subject their earnest consideration, with the view of having such appliances introduced in case they had not already been adopted in the mines under the charge of the managers to whom the Circulars were addressed. That Circular, he (Mr. Fenwick) might add, had the support of nearly every Inspector of Mines in the country. He would quote from various Inspectors' letters evidence bearing upon this question. The Inspector for the Newcastle district said that motives of economy should have no weight at all where danger to life or limb was even remotely possible. The Inspector for the Durham district said that, in his opinion, there was a necessity for the use of safety hooks in every instance where winding machines were used for the winding of men from mines, and where consequently life was entrusted to human weakness. He would also mention a case in which 10 lives were saved in consequence of the use of these detaching and suspending hooks. Seeing that the spirit of the Bill was to provide greater safety for working miners in following their dangerous avocations, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the

Home Secretary would see his way to accept the Amendment. It had been objected that the expense of providing this machinery in small mines would prevent their working; but he would point out that the objection was met by the Amendment, which would not interfere with mines in which less than 50 men were employed. There were over 3,000 of these hooks now employed in mines, which number was rapidly increasing; and he submitted that their use ought to be made compulsory.

Mr. MATTHEWS suggested that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Pickard) should withdraw his proposal in favour of an Amendment which he (Mr. Matthews) would propose.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. Secretary Matthews, the following Amendment made:—In page 33, line 33, after the word "shaft," insert—

"If in any mine the winding apparatus is not provided with some automatic contrivance to prevent over-winding, then the cage, when men are being raised, shall not be wound up at a speed exceeding three miles an hour."

Amendment proposed, in page 35, line 4, to leave out from the word "number," to the end of line 5, inclusive.—(*Mr. Tomlinson.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill," put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. Burt (for Sir Joseph Pease), the following Amendment made:—In page 35, line 21, leave out from "no person" to "workman," in line 24, both inclusive, and insert—

"No person not now employed as a coal or ironstone getter shall be allowed to work alone as a coal or ironstone getter in the face of the workings until he has had two years' experience of such work under the supervision of a skilled workman, or unless he shall have been previously employed for two years in or about the face of the workings of a mine."

Mr. W. ABRAHAM (Glamorgan, Rhondda) (for Mr. A. J. Williams) (Glamorgan, S.) proposed the insertion of the following Proviso:—

"There shall be established at one or more central places in every district, to be selected by the Inspector for such district, a station or stations, which shall be provided with such appliances and apparatus as the Inspector shall consider necessary for exploring purposes, and for succour and relief, in case of colliery accidents. The expense of establishing and maintaining such station or stations, as well as the expense of employing men for the purpose of keeping in efficient order, managing, and using such appliances and apparatus, shall be borne and paid by the urban sanitary authorities and the rural sanitary authorities respectively comprised within each such district in such proportion as shall from time to time be apportioned by the Local Government Board."

In proposing that Amendment, he did so because he believed that if such a provision had been in force in former years a number of valuable lives might have been saved.

Amendment proposed, in line 24, at end, add—

"There shall be established at one or more central place in every district, to be selected by the inspector for such district, a station or stations, which shall be provided with such appliances and apparatus as the inspector shall consider necessary for exploring purposes, and for succour and relief, in case of colliery accidents.

"The expense of establishing and maintaining such station or stations, as well as the expense of employing men for the purpose of keeping in efficient order, managing, and using such appliances and apparatus shall be borne and paid by the urban sanitary authorities and the rural sanitary authorities respectively comprised within each such district in such proportion as shall from time to time be apportioned by the Local Government Board."—(*Mr. W. Abraham.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. SPEAKER pointed out that, as the proposal involved expenditure which was to be chargeable to the rates, it was out of Order.

Mr. W. ABRAHAM said, that under the circumstances he would only move the first part of the Amendment.

Mr. SPEAKER observed that in that case the proposal would necessarily be inoperative.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 35, line 31, to leave out from the word "Act," to the end of the Clause.—(*Mr. Pickard.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed, in page 40, line 17, to leave out from the word "Act," to the words "he may," in line 19.—(*Mr. Woodall.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Other Amendments made.

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [2nd September] *reported.*

First Resolution postponed till *Monday* next.

Subsequent Resolutions *agreed to.*

House adjourned at five Minutes
before Six o'clock till
Monday next.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 5th September, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* —CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS III. — LAW AND JUSTICE, Vote 28; CLASS IV.— EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART, Votes 13 to 18; CLASS VI. — NON - EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES, Votes 5, 6, 8; CLASS I. — PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Vote 24; CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered — First Reading* — Vacant Grounds (Nuisances Prevention) * [388].

Committee — Deeds of Arrangement (No. 2) [381]—R.P.; Sheriffs (Consolidation) [262], *debate adjourned;* Technical Schools (Scotland) [358]—R.P.

Considered as amended — Third Reading — Labourers' Allotments [387], and *passed.*

Withdrawn—Law of Evidence Amendment * [316].

QUESTIONS.

DISPENSARIES, &c. (IRELAND)—DR. CORRY, MEDICAL DISPENSARY DOCTOR OF DRUMQUIN, CO. TYRONE.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) (for Mr. M. J. KENNY) (Tyrone, Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the Local Government Board have considered the charge of neglect of duty brought by Mr. William Hegarty, of Curraghmacall, against Dr. Corry, Medical Dispensary Doctor of Drumquin, in the Castledery Union, County Tyrone; if he can state the effect of the Report of the Inspector; and, whether the Local Government Board have come to any decision thereupon?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Local Government Board had had correspondence with Dr. Corry in respect to the matter alluded to. There had not been a sworn inquiry held by an Inspector, as Dr. Corry had satisfactorily explained his conduct, and the Board did not see anything in the matter calling for further inquiry.

MR. SEXTON: Has the right hon. and gallant Gentleman any objection to say what was the nature of the satisfactory explanation?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, it seemed that, in the first instance, a ticket was brought to Dr. Corry which was not signed by the person whose name it bore, but which purported to be signed by a gentleman named Hamilton. Dr. Corry knew the signature of Dr. Hamilton, and was satisfied that the ticket did come from him. At 1 o'clock on the following morning it was brought back signed by Dr. Hamilton, and Dr. Corry went immediately and found that the case was by no means urgent, and gave the husband his opinion that his services would not be needed till 12 o'clock next day. Early in the forenoon the husband came again with another ticket, which he handed to Dr. Corry, informing him that he had telegraphed to Omagh for the services of Dr. Todd. Dr. Corry said in that case he could not interfere with Dr. Todd. The woman was delivered about 6 o'clock on that evening safely and satisfactorily.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—THE BURSTING OF A GUN ON TRIAL AT HOUNSLOW.

COLONEL DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the gun which was stated in *The Globe* of August 25 to have burst at Hounslow when tested by "a party of artillerymen," was made in Woolwich Arsenal, or where?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): No official Report of the occurrence has been received; but it is understood that the gun which burst was a gun designed by Colonel Hope and fired by Colonel Hope himself, and that it burst with great violence at the first round. It was not made at Woolwich Arsenal.

WAR OFFICE (ADJUTANT-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT)—REGIMENTAL BANDS AT POLITICAL MEETINGS.

SIR EDWARD WATKIN (Hythe) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he is aware that a Circular has, presumably with his sanction, been issued by the Adjutant General's Department, to the following effect:—

> "No Band, in future, whether belonging to the Regular or Auxiliary Forces, will be permitted to play in public without the express sanction of the Commanding Officer of the Regiment or Battalion, or, if it belongs to the Auxiliary Forces, of the Officer Commanding the Regimental District or of the Officer Commanding the Auxiliary Artillery or Engineers, as the case may be, who will ascertain before giving sanction that nothing of a political tendency is likely to occur at the place the Band is to play. Whenever sanction for a Band playing is given, an immediate Report of it is to be made to his Office, stating place, date, and nature of occasion. Should it be found, while the Band is playing, that the meeting, party, &c., it is playing at is a political one, the Warrant or Non-commissioned Officer in charge will immediately withdraw the Band;"

if he will state the reasons for this Order; and, why Colonels of Volunteer Regiments, whose Bands are maintained by local subscriptions, are to be deprived of their present power over the Bands of their respective Regiments?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Order quoted in the Question was not issued from the War Office. Bands, whether of the Army, Militia, or Volunteers, have been prohibited from playing in their military capacity at any entertainment organized for political purposes; and they have been further restricted, in the absence of special permission from the War Office, to their own military districts. No other curtailment of the power of colonels of Volunteer regiments over their bands is intended.

LAW AND JUSTICE—MIDDLEWICH (CHESHIRE) PETTY SESSIONS—SENTENCE ON JOHN M'CONVENT.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) (for Mr. BRUNNER) (Cheshire, Northwich) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that, at the Petty Sessions of Middlewich, Cheshire, on Wednesday 24th August, John M'Convent, a young Irish lad, who had come from County Antrim in search of work, but had failed to secure more than five days' work, was sentenced to 21 days' imprisonment with hard labour for begging; whether the policeman who brought the charge stated in his evidence that, whilst in plain clothes, he told the prisoner that there was no police just about there; and, whether the punishment may be in part remitted?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: The Secretary of State has received a Report from the Justices on this case. The prisoner, who is 25 years old, had been previously convicted of a similar offence a fortnight before, sentenced to 14 days' imprisonment, and cautioned not to offend again. A plain clothes constable whom he met on the road told him no police lived near there; but cautioned him not to beg, as he would be apprehended. He was not destitute, as a silver watch and 1*d.* were found upon him. He appeared to the magistrates to be a regular vagrant; and as they informed the Secretary of State that professional tramps abound in this neighbourhood and commit frequent depredations the Secretary of State must decline to advise any interference.

POST OFFICE (ENGLAND AND WALES)—POSTAL ROUTE AT GREAT SANGHALL, CHESTER.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) (for Mr. BRUNNER) (Cheshire, Northwich) asked the Postmaster General, Why the route taken by the postman of Great Sanghall, Chester, on his return journey was altered about a year ago; whether the present route is considerably longer, and has caused complaint to be made to the Postmaster at Chester; whether the only household benefited is that of a Mr. Trelawny; and, what are the reasons, if any, against a return to the old practice?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I am sorry that the hon. Member who is responsible for this Question is not in his place, because I think the House will agree with me that it is a conspicuous instance of those trivial and frivolous Questions which ought not to engage the attention of Parliament. It should have been addressed to the Sub-Postmaster of Sanghall, who was quite competent to reply to it. However, as it has been asked, I can inform the hon. Member that the route referred to was altered to shorten the postman's walk. No additional benefit is conferred on Mr. Trelawny. One gentleman living 150 yards from the post office has made a complaint. He used to give the postman letters to post on his return journey. I fear that, as at present advised, I cannot revert to the old practice.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—INCENDIARY FIRES NEAR RHODE, KING'S COUNTY.

DR. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the fires, evidently incendiary, which have occurred near Rhode, King's County; whether it is a fact that a magistrate named Kerr refused to lend any assistance to put out the fire; whether the three local magistrates refused to attend a public meeting at Rhode, called to protest against the perpetration of these outrages and to offer a reward for the apprehension of the perpetrators; and, whether such a meeting of the priests and people of Rhode was held, under the presidency of the Rev. Mr. O'Brien, and the sum of £20 subscribed on the spot towards such a reward?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The attention of the Executive has been called to the fires which have recently occurred in King's County, and the police are actively engaged in making inquiries in the matter. I am informed that it is not the case that Mr. Kerr, J.P., refused to lend assistance to put out a fire. The magistrates were asked to attend a meeting last Sunday week under the auspices of the Irish National League; but this they declined to do. The meeting was held. The Rev. Mr. O'Brien was the only priest present. I understand that subscriptions to the extent of about £20 were promised at the meeting, but that no money was actually subscribed.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (SCOTLAND) — APPOINTMENT OF DR. KERR, A CHIEF INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, under the terms of the appointment of Dr. Kerr, one of Her Majesty's Chief Inspectors of Schools in Scotland, at a salary of £900 per annum, Dr. Kerr is bound to devote his whole time and attention to the duties of that office; whether he holds any other appointments, or discharges any other duties, public or private, from which he derives emolument or receives remuneration; and, if so, their nature, and the amount of emoluments; whether, before accepting these appointments, or undertaking these offices, the consent of the Scotch Education Department was previously asked and obtained; and, whether the Department has power to grant such authority?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): Whilst Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools are bound, under the terms of their appointment, to devote all the time and attention requisite for the proper discharge of their official duties, they are entitled to a vacation, which they may utilize as they see fit. During the past year the Scotch Education Department has, under the terms of Section 19 of the Education (Scotland) Act, 1878, and at the request of the school authorities, assigned to Dr. Kerr a share in the examination of three higher class schools. The days devoted by Dr. Kerr to this work have been charged to "vacation and private business," and not to "official duties." The remuneration to be granted to the examiners for this work is a matter of arrangement between the Department and the school authorities, and has not as yet been fixed. Any other duties which Dr. Kerr may discharge are undertaken during his leisure time, which is at his own disposal.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS OF LISTOWEL—APPROPRIATION OF FINES.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) (for Mr. STACK) (Kerry, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the Town Commissioners of Listowel do not receive any portion of the fines imposed at Petty Sessions on offenders who reside out of the town, for offences committed within its boundary; and, whether he will communicate with the Constabulary Authorities in Ireland, with a view to having such prosecutions conducted before the Town Court?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the District Inspector of Constabulary informed him that the Clerk of Listowel Petty Sessions reported that the Town Commissioners do get one-half of the fines referred to. The present arrangement with regard to these prosecutions appeared to be proper and fair; and the Government could not undertake to make representations to the Constabulary Authorities to the effect stated in the Question.

RAILWAYS (IRELAND) — CORK AND MUSKERRY LIGHT RAILWAY—EX-HEAD CONSTABLE IRVINE.

Mr. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether ex-Head Constable Irvine was appointed to the position of station-master at Cork, on the Cork and Muskerry Light Railway; whether the following notice was posted up in Cork on the 12th August last—

> "Boycott the new line of railway unless ex-Head Constable Irving is removed from the position of station-master at Cork. Numbers of respectable citizens are walking the streets idle, and their families starving, while Irvine, who draws a large pension and owns considerable house property near St. Luke's, gets important employment from a Company got up expressly to benefit idle people from the country. Irvine was known as the most insulting bigot in the Force, and his conduct on the day of Father Keller's arrest called forth the condemnation of the Press;"

whether, since the posting up of the above notice, ex-Head Constable Irvine has been frequently subjected to annoyance in public; and, whether, in consequence, he has been obliged to resign his position as station-master?

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Before the right hon. and gallant Gentleman answers the Question, might I ask if it is not a fact that Head Constable Irvine, referred to in the Question, gave public notice that he had resigned his position on the Cork and Muskerry Light Railway on account of the long hours of duty—from early morning till late at night—hours which he had no reason to believe would form part of his duty when he accepted the position?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: No, Sir. I have no reason to believe that Head Constable Irvine made any such Report.

Mr. FLYNN: It appeared in the public papers.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: I have read some of the public papers, and have seen no such information. With regard to the Question of my hon. Friend, I am informed that ex-Head Constable Irvine, who was reported by the Inspector General of Constabulary to be a man of exemplary character, was, upon his recent retirement from the Force on pension, appointed to the position mentioned. Notices in the terms quoted were posted up in Cork on the night of the 12th of August. Following upon these notices, the ex-Head Constable was jeered at and otherwise interfered with when proceeding to and from his place of employment. In consequence of this he has resigned his position as station-master.

POST OFFICE—THE CIRCULAR POST.

Mr. WOODALL (Hanley) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been called to the numerous complaints in regard to restrictions upon the use of the circular post, and especially as to the severe interpretations of the term "communications in the nature of a letter;" and, whether he will endeavour to relax these restrictions, and to allow any open communications in the general nature of circulars, or which, being business orders or invoices, are clearly distinguishable from letters, to pass unchallenged by the halfpenny post?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): As I replied to a Question of the hon. Member for East Norfolk (Sir Edward Birkbeck) on the 25th ultimo, on a somewhat similar subject, so I beg to answer the hon. Member's Question— namely, that the subject has been for some time under my consideration, and that there is, without doubt, some anomaly in the present practice; and it is one I hope I shall see my way, with further consideration, to remove.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness) asked, if the right hon. Gentleman would consider the cases of those who were compelled to issue circulars by Act of Parliament, such as Friendly Societies, Insurance Companies, &c., who sent out thousands annually, all in the same terms, but were charged the penny rate?

MR. RAIKES: That is the subject to which I referred.

WAR OFFICE—WARRANT OFFICERS IN CIVIL COSTUME—THE QUEEN'S REGULATIONS.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether warrant officers are permitted, when off duty, to appear in civilian clothing in the locality in which they are quartered?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): The Order on the subject is as follows (Queen's Regulations, sec. vii. paragraph 110 A):—

> "Conductors of supplies, conductors of stores, and master gunners of the first and second classes are permitted to wear plain clothes under the same conditions as those laid down for officers, and all warrant officers when on pass or furlough and leaving the place where they are stationed may dress in plain clothes."

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—MAIL CAR FROM SKIBBEREEN TO BALTIMORE.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether the mail car running between Skibbereen and Baltimore will be permanently continued?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University), in reply, said, he knew the interest which the hon. Member took in this question, and he had had further inquiry made upon it. He could not yet state, however, whether the car would be permanently continued. He would require further time to enable him to form a permanent judgment on the matter. Meanwhile, the car would be temporarily continued.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ASSAULT BY MISTAKE IN CORK CITY.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether complaints have reached him that, on the night of the 31st of August, John Sheehan, a lamplighter, while performing his nightly duty, was attacked and beaten at Shinnicks Well, in the City of Cork, by a sub-constable named Brown, who was semi-intoxicated; whether an explanation was made on the night of the alleged assault by Sub-Constable Brown and Constable Kirby to the effect that they were executing a warrant, and they thought Sheehan was the person wanted; and, whether investigation into the matter will be made?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Constabulary reported that at 3 A.M. a constable and a sergeant proceeded to a lane to execute a warrant against a bad character. While the sergeant entered the house a man came down the lane and was stopped by Brown, the constable, who thought he was the man wanted. But on identifying him he allowed him to proceed. The constable denied that he had done more than stop this man Sheehan and prevent him from breaking away. Sheehan reported the matter to a Superintendent, by whom the sergeant and the constable were shortly afterwards met; and the Superintendent says that, so far from having charged the constable with being drunk, he censured Sheehan.

DR. TANNER asked, how it was that Sheehan was so much bruised, and how he was incapacitated from doing his duty if the constable did not assault him?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, he had no Report as to Sheehan having been incapacitated from doing his duty. He understood that Sheehan had been directed by the Corporation to proceed by summons, and until that summons was disposed of no further action would be taken.

UNITED STATES—SEIZURE OF BRITISH FISHING VESSELS IN BEHRING'S STRAITS.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the report from Victoria, British Columbia, 31st August, is correct—namely—

> "Another British sealing schooner has been seized as a prize by a United States Revenue cutter, for illegal fishing in Behring's Straits;"

whether her papers, arms, and firearms, and cargo of sealskins, were taken on board the cutter, and that she was ordered to proceed to Sitka; and, whether her captain, in taking the captured schooner into British waters, will be protected by the British Authorities, or will be by them obliged to fulfil his promise and obligation and take the schooner into Sitka?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government have no information of any seizure within the last few days. We are informed that American revenue cutters seized certain Canadian vessels on the 2nd, 9th, 12th, and 17th of August. Her Majesty's Government are in communication with the Government of the United States on the subject of these seizures.

IRISH REPRODUCTIVE LOAN FUND—REFUSAL OF LOANS TO FISHERMEN IN BALLYCOTTON, CO. CORK.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that the Reverend Mr. Norris, C.C., of Ballycotton, lately made an application to the Dublin Fishery Board for a loan of £500 out of the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund to purchase a first-class fishing boat (passage built) for the Ballycotton fishermen, and that the application was refused, on the ground that the portion of the Fund allocated to the County Cork was exhausted; whether it is a fact that large sums which have been allocated out of the Fund to other districts are lying idle, amongst which is a sum of £17,000 for the County Kerry; if so, for how long has this sum been unexpended; and, whether he will consider whether a recommendation could be made that if the amount allocated to a county be not claimed within a specified time it may be given to applicants in another district on their satisfying the Board as to the justice of their claim?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The application made by the Rev. Mr. Norris was refused on the ground stated. It is the case that large sums allocated to other districts are lying idle, including a sum of £12,000 for the County Kerry, the greater portion of which sum has remained unexpended since the passing of the Irish Reproductive Loan Fund Act in 1874. The allocation of the Fund being regulated by Statute, the Government have no power to interfere.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—STARVING PUPILS IN ELEMENTARY BOARD SCHOOLS.

COLONEL EYRE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether he is aware that, on the 2nd of this month, at Stanhope Street Board School, Arthur Bailey, aged 10 years, of 6, Little Pancras Street, Tottenham Court Road, and Gabriel Jones, aged 10 years, of 29, Drummond Street, Euston Square, were in school between the hours of 10 a.m. and noon, having had no food since noon the previous day; and, whether he could arrange with the School Board Authorities that these cases might be brought under the immediate notice of the Boards of Guardians in the event of there being no local charity by which they might be relieved?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): I believe the facts as stated in the first paragraph of the Question to be correct. How cases of this kind should be dealt with involves a question of policy; but I have been glad to bring my hon. and gallant Friend's suggestion under the notice of the School Board Authorities.

LAW AND POLICE (SCOTLAND)—DISMISSAL OF WALTER STEWART FROM THE RENFREWSHIRE POLICE FORCE.

MR. D. CRAWFORD (Lanark, N.E.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the attention of the Secretary for Scotland has been called to the complaint of Walter Stewart, for eight years a constable in the Renfrewshire Police Force, who had been rewarded for meritorious services, and who was informed by letter on the 9th August, 1885, that his services would no longer be required after 7th September; whether, in the previous year, the constables had petitioned the Commissioners of Supply to adopt the first Government model scale of pay, with a view to increase of pay, and the scale was adopted, but was followed by new arrangements, which resulted in a diminution instead of an increase of pay; whether Stewart had committed no offence, except to represent this respectfully to the Inspector of Constabulary on 31st July, 1885, when the men were asked whether they had any complaints; whether he is aware that it is alleged that the example of Stewart has intimidated other constables, who suffered from the same grievance, but are afraid to complain, whether the Secretary for Scotland will protect the constables in exercising their right of complaint when Her Majesty's Inspector invites them to make complaints; and, whether, if the facts as above stated are correct, he will give Stewart some redress, or use his influence to obtain some redress for him?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The attention of the Secretary for Scotland has been called to the case of Walter Stewart, from whom no complaint was received for 21 months, and till after the recent death of the Chief Constable, who alone could have fully explained the circumstances of the case. The result of the inquiry which has been made was communicated to Stewart on the 13th ultimo. The effect of the adjustment of the model scale of pay is correctly described by the hon. Member. But the Police Committee state that this matter has long since been rectified; and that if there are constables still dissatisfied any representation they may make to them will be duly considered. The Police Committee have been unable, in consequence of the death of the Chief Constable, to furnish the specific ground upon which notice of discharge was given to Walter Stewart. But the hon. Member must, from his experience, be fully aware that the right of dismissal or discharge rests entirely with the Chief Constable. The Secretary for Scotland has no grounds to believe that the late Chief Constable exercised his statutory powers otherwise than for the well-being and good discipline of his police force; and he cannot, therefore, promise any further redress to Walter Stewart. The Secretary for Scotland has no ground for supposing that constables require protection if they complain to the Inspector of Constabulary; and it would be detrimental to the control and discipline of police forces in Scotland to interfere generally with the statutory powers of Local Authorities.

POST OFFICE—MEMORIAL OF SORTERS OF THE LONDON DISTRICT.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether he now can give his promised reply to the Memorial of the sorters of the London District asking that the Order of 30th November shall be extended to them?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): A decision has been come to in this case, which will shortly be conveyed to the Memorialists in the usual way. It would be premature to notify the change now. It will take effect next year.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACT—IMPORTATION OF ADULTERATED YEAST.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) (for Mr. P. STANHOPE) (Wednesbury) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is aware that large quantities of yeast adulterated with potato and maize starch are imported into England, and that there have been frequent convictions of persons who have innocently sold such yeast; and, whether he will take steps to prevent the importation of adulterated yeast, or to have its character more distinctly declared by the importers?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. LONG) (Wilts, Devizes) (who replied) said: I am aware that large quantities of yeast are imported into this country; but I do not know to what extent such yeast is adulterated with potato and maize starch, nor has my attention been called to frequent convictions of persons who have innocently sold it. Any examination of the yeast at the time of importation would have to be undertaken by the officers of Customs; but I learn from the Board of Customs that they have no means of ascertaining whether the yeast is adulterated or not. I think that adulterated yeast may be left to be dealt with under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act. The seller can protect himself by obtaining a written warranty from those from whom he buys the yeast.

BOARD OF TRADE (RAILWAY DEPARTMENT)—ACCIDENTS ON THE MIDLAND RAILWAY.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to an accident on the Midland Railway on Saturday last, when the 12.20 train from St. Pancras ran into a coal train shunting close to Wath Station; and to an accident at Cudworth, on the Midland Line, on Wednesday, 24th August, when, in shunting an empty passenger train, the man in charge of the engine brought the train into collision with the buffer stops, knocked a goods wagon almost to pieces, carried away part of a signal cabin, and smashed the buffer stops, and part of the permanent way; and, further, to an accident on Thursday, 25th August, just beyond Armley, near Leeds, when there was a serious delay of traffic, and a single line had to be used for some hours for "up" and "down" trains; and, whether he will cause inquiry to be made into those accidents, and especially as to whether the trains concerned were in charge of men recently appointed as engine drivers or firemen?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): An inquiry into the accident at Wath was held on the 2nd instant; but the Inspector's Report has not yet been received. The accident at Cudworth occurred not to an empty carriage train, but to an engine only, which the fireman, in the absence of the driver on the platform, was improperly moving. No one was injured by the accident. The driver had been in the service 24 years, and as driver 17 years. The fireman had been three weeks in the service, and had previously been a fireman on the Great Eastern Railway. The accident near Armley was caused by the draw-bar of a private owner's wagon coming out, causing two other wagons to leave the rails. The line was cleared in two hours, and satisfactory arrangements were made in the meantime for working the traffic. Very little damage was done either to the wagons or the permanent way, and no one was injured. The driver had been 19 years in the service, 11 years as driver. The fireman is stated to be a new man, but thoroughly competent. In these circumstances, the Board of Trade do not think it necessary to make any further inquiry.

LICENSING ACTS—THE WORKINGTON LICENSING MAGISTRATES

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that the Workington Licensing Magistrates have intimated their intention of granting a provisional licence next Wednesday to a locality when its issue is most strongly and almost unanimously opposed by the town's people, and by the neighbouring inhabitants and property owners, as well as by most of the Religious Bodies and the Representative Bodies in the town; and, whether, under these circumstances, any steps can be taken by the Home Office to secure respect for the wish of the majority?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. STUART-WORTLEY) (Sheffield, Hallam) (who replied) said: The Secretary of State understands, from a newspaper account of a meeting of the Justices on the 24th of August, that they had deferred their decision with respect to this licence for a fortnight, not that they had intimated their intention to grant it. The Home Office has no jurisdiction in this matter; and the Secretary of State is unable to interfere with the discretion of Justices in granting or refusing licences. He has, however, sent a copy of the hon. Baronet's Question to the Justices, and invited their observations upon it, and has received, in reply, the following telegram from the clerk to the Justices at Workington, which arrived shortly before I entered the House—

> "A majority of the Justices, after hearing evidence and due consideration, decided to grant the licence. There were petitions against from the School and Burial Boards; but none by Local Boards, or any other Representative Body. There were also petitions from inhabitants, including Temperance Societies and property owners in the immediate neighbourhood, signed altogether, it is estimated, by 700 or 800 townspeople, out of a population of over 20,000. Except the congregation of a neighbouring Baptist chapel, no Religious Body presented a Petition against. Matter adjourned for judgment to meeting to be held on Wednesday next."

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that Petitions against the issue of the licence have been signed by 1,200 householders?

MR. STUART-WORTLEY: I cannot say.

Subsequently,

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said that, arising out of the answer just given by the Under Secretary, he wished to inquire of the First Lord of the Treasury whether, if a private Member brought in a Bill to suspend the issue by the Excise of new licences authorized during the present Brewster Sessions, pending promised legislation with regard to licences, the Government would refrain from blocking such a Bill?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, it must be perfectly obvious to the hon. Baronet that the Government were quite unable to give an affirmative answer to a Question of that kind, and one asked without any Notice whatever. But if the hon. Baronet desired to have an answer, he might say that, at this period of the Session, it would, undoubtedly, be the duty of the Government to oppose such a measure.

ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT—RANK AND POSITION OF MEDICAL OFFICERS.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether the Director General of the Army Medical Department informed the Select Committee on the Army Estimates that the principal reason why medical men refused to entered the Army, and the supply of candidates ceased about 1870, was—

> "The refusal to recognize medical men in the Army as on an equality with the combatant and other officers,"

and that at present—

> "The medical officers feel that they are not treated as they ought to be with respect to rank and position,"

and that they desire the restoration of the position defined in the 17th Clause of the Royal Warrant of 1878; and, whether, as the agitation in the medical schools and journals, and the dissatisfaction felt by military surgeons may again diminish or stop the supply of candidates, he will appoint, as he promised, a Departmental Committee to consider the question of the rank and position of medical officers?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle), in reply, said, he had several times stated that the recent Royal Warrant for abrogating relative rank detracted in no sense from the status, precedence, or privileges of the medical officers of the Army. It was a mistake to suppose that he had promised a Departmental Committee to inquire into the subject.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MAJOR LIDWELL, DROMARD HOUSE, CO. TIPPERARY.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the morning of Sunday the 22nd ultimo, Major Lidwell, of Dromard House, County Tipperary, went, accompanied by other persons, to the farm of one of his tenants, Patrick Stapleton, and, by the use of an explosive, blew up a bridge connecting the farm with the public road; whether, in consequence of the explosion, a woman named Kennedy was struck on the temple by a stone; whether Major Lidwell returned to the place after dark the same evening, and, by another explosion, completed the destruction of the bridge; whether he then proceeded to the house occupied by Mrs. Stapleton and her children, threatened to "blow them and their house into the elements," and also threatened some neighbours who came to the assistance of Mrs. Stapleton, that he would make them suffer; whether Mrs. Stapleton immediately reported the case to the local police, and has been since informed by them that they are awaiting "instructions from the authorities;" whether Major Lidwell adjudicates as a magistrate in the Templemore District; and, what determination has been come to upon the case?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, this Question only appeared upon the Paper this morning; and he must, therefore, ask the hon. Gentleman to postpone it whilst he made inquiry.

MR. SEXTON said, surely the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was aware that he raised the question in debate in the House several nights ago, and that the offence occurred a fortnight since?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I cannot allow the word "offence" until an offence has been proved. When the hon. Member mentioned the matter in the House I did make some inquiries; but I have not received sufficient information to enable me to give a reply to his Question.

MR. SEXTON: I wish to give Notice that I will expect a definite and conclusive reply to-night on the Report of the Vote for Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Perhaps the hon. Gentleman will allow me to say to what extent my information goes. The hon. Gentleman says that a stone bridge was blown up. My information is that it was a temporary bridge composed of sleepers. All the information I have received so far is in favour of Major Lidwell; but I did not think it right to give that information, which is only from one source, without making further inquiries in order to test its accuracy.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—LAND AND QUARTER SESSIONS AT GRANARD.

MR. CAREW (Kildare, N.) (for Mr. T. M. HEALY) (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, What is the explanation of the six months' delay in dealing with the Granard Memorial as to Land and Quarter Sessions being held in that town; and, when will the matter be settled?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the matter referred to in the Question would be before the Committee of the Privy Council this week, and the Report would be submitted as soon as possible afterwards. Some time was necessary for the usual inquiries; and the Question was not one of urgency, as any order made for additional Courts would not take effect until after the Sessions, and the new Courts could not be held till next year.

EMIGRATION (SCOTLAND)—ASSISTED EMIGRATION FROM THE HIGHLANDS.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the Lord Advocate, What are the intentions of Her Majesty's Government with regard to emigration from the Highlands of Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities), in reply, said, matters in connection with this Question were on the point of decision; and he would therefore ask his hon. Friend to repeat the Question on Thursday.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—SEQUESTRATIONS OF MR. J. M. RUSSELL.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) (for Mr. CUNNINGHAME GRAHAM) (Lanark, N.W.) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether, in the recent sequestrations of Mr. James M. Russell, which has excited so much attention in Scotland, it is a fact that Mr. Todrich, Procurator Fiscal of Haddingtonshire, acted as agent both for Mr. A. H. Tennent (the landlord) and also for Mr. Russell's Trustee?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): No, Sir. It is not the fact that Mr. Todrich, the Procurator Fiscal of Haddingtonshire, acted as agent either for Mr. A. H. Tennent, Mr. Russell's landlord, or for the Trustee.

RULES AND ORDERS OF THE HOUSE—DIVISIONS.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he will, at the commencement of next Session, give the House an opportunity of expressing an opinion as to the continuance or discontinuance of the present method of taking Divisions?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): This is a matter upon which I must confer with the Speaker and the Officers of the House, as I am unable to give a positive answer to the Question.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, At what hour he proposed to take the Labourers' Allotments Bill that evening?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I hope to take it at as early an hour as the conclusion of the Irish Estimates will permit me to do.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.) asked, whether they could count upon the Bill being taken that evening?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Certainly.

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

In reply to Mr. WOODALL (Hanley),

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, he hoped the Army Votes might be taken on Wednesday; but he was not able to say positively. The order of procedure was that the Civil Service Votes would be taken first, after which the Navy Votes would be proceeded with, and then the Army Votes.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): Can the right hon. Gentleman fix a day for the Indian Budget?

MR. W. H. SMITH: It will be taken as soon as Supply is concluded. I am not able to say when that will be.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—EVICTIONS AT HERBERTSTOWN, CO. LIMERICK—DEATH OF MRS. MOLONEY.

MR. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention had been directed to the eviction of Mrs. Moloney, at Herbertstown, County Limerick; whether he was aware that she was 80 years of age and in a bad condition of health; and, whether the evicting landlords and the Sheriff were not told that the eviction would probably lead to her death, yet refused to stay the eviction; whether Mrs. Moloney died the third day after her eviction; and, whether the Government would order an investigation into the conduct of the Sheriff?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): My recollection of the facts does not absolutely tally with that of the hon. Gentleman; and I must ask him to put the Question on the Paper, and I will look into it, as I would not like to trust myself to give an answer to the House without having an opportunity of refreshing my memory.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887 — PROSECUTION OF MR. JOHN HAYDEN.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) asked the Attorney General for Ireland the following Question, of which he had given private Notice:—Whether, having considered the case of Mr. Hayden, who had been served with two summonses under the Coercion Act, he had decided to proceed against that gentleman upon two charges arising out of the same transaction?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): I cannot make any statement with regard to pending prosecutions, which would limit the discretion and responsibility of the officials prosecuting, which must be exercised on facts as established in evidence before the Court. I may add, for the information of the hon. Member, that if it should appear that the summonses were for the same cause of complaint, and only alternative methods of procedure, of course only one sentence could in that case be imposed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £60,854, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers of the City of Dublin."

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I am desirous, on this Vote, to call attention to the extraordinary manner in which the Resident Magistrates have been appointed in Ireland; to direct attention also to the very curious classification adopted in regard to them; and, further, to their utter unfitness, as a rule, to discharge the very responsible duties which may be cast upon them in the near future. It is all the more necessary that, on this Vote, the Committee should have their attention drawn to the qualification of the Resident Magistrates in Ireland, on account of the passing of a recent measure in this House called "The Crimes Act," the very first section of which enables these Resident Magistrates to conduct a preliminary inquiry when any person is accused of an offence under the Act. We are told in the Act that these preliminary inquiries are to be conducted by two Resident Magistrates, of whose legal knowledge and experience the Lord Chancellor shall be satisfied. Now, if a Resident Magistrate is to be entrusted with the exercise of these powers—which are nothing more nor less than a revival of the old Star Chamber powers—it is only natural to expect that the magistrates should be, to use the words of the Act, "men of legal knowledge and legal experience;" not only that, but the Lord Chancellor is to be satisfied that they are men of legal knowledge and legal experience; and that is laid down as the source or the qualification which is to guide him in drawing his supply of Resident Magistrates. Now, when I turn to the list of Resident Magistrates in Ireland I find that out of 56 whose names are included in the Return which has been laid before the House 20 have been Army officers, and 19 officers of the Constabulary. Out of the entire number there are only five in whom the Lord Chancellor could have any confidence whatever on account of their legal knowledge and experience. Taking into consideration the present state of Ireland, in view of the legislation which the Government have forced upon an unwilling House by means of their mechanical majorities, I think we ought to view with suspicion any Vote proposed to this Committee for the payment of Resident Magistrates appointed under such an anomalous system as I have described. What confidence can the people of Ireland have in a body of Resident Magistrates constituted as these men are, 19 of them having been selected from the Constabulary, and 20 from the Army, with a few also from the Navy. It will be seen that they are almost entirely selected from Her Majesty's Forces, and from the Constabulary, which must be regarded as a semi-military force. I look upon it as a grave and startling fact that two-thirds of the Irish Resident Magistrates should be promoted from those Services; and I trust that the Committee will not pass the Vote without having a close and strict explanation from the Government as to what the qualifications of these gentlemen are, and why, in the present state of things, they should be retained in this position. In addition to the fact that the 19 Constabulary officers have never had any opportunity of acquiring either legal knowledge or legal experience, there are these 20 Army officers who have never had any acquaintance with legal procedure or Courts of Justice, and who are far better acquainted with the proceedings of a drum-head court martial. In addition to the gentlemen I have referred to, I find one magistrate down the list who seems to have qualified himself for the important position of Resident Magistrate in Ireland at a salary of £550 a-year by following the avocation of an Army tutor. I have no doubt that an Army tutor is a very useful agent. He has not only gone through his degrees in the Army, but he has been appointed to teach the elementary tactics of war, and he ought to be well up in what is known as strategy. A part of his duty was to qualify Militiamen for commissions in the Army—a very useful qualification, no doubt; but I fail to see—and I think the Committee will be in a similar position—what qualification an Army tutor has for the appointment of Resident Magistrate in Ireland. So far as military tactics are concerned, this gentleman, Mr. John Bristol, has very high qualifications, and will probably know how to surround a large number of people with a small number of military or police. So far as that qualification goes, he may be in the position to give the Lord Lieutenant the highest satisfaction. But what I want to know is, what qualification this gentleman possesses for sitting upon the Bench and dispensing justice to Her Majesty's subjects; and especially what qualification he possesses, in the present condition of things in Ireland, when it is absolutely necessary that men of legal training and legal mind should sit upon the Bench in order to hold a fair balance between the authorities and the people who may be brought before them, and who may find it necessary to discuss points of law of the greatest possible nicety? The duty the Resident Magistrate has to discharge in the first instance is to make a special inquiry of a somewhat private nature, and then to preside and administer justice in a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. What qualification has an Army tutor for such a position? Absolutely none. I maintain that the appointment of these 20 Army officers and the 19 Constabulary officers is a scandal, and I trust the Committee will closely scrutinize the Vote before they allow it to be taken. Looking down the list I find that in addition to the qualifications I have mentioned there is a Mr. Lynch, whose qualification is that he has occupied a position of Consul in the Colonies. Now, what qualification is that for dispensing justice and dealing with nice points of law in Ireland? What qualification it is for dealing with a country which is supposed to be an integral part of the United Kingdom I am altogether at a loss to say. A gentleman who has occupied this position can have no idea whatever of the equal laws and equal liberties which hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, and hon. Gentlemen on the Benches above the Gangway on this side, have so repeatedly assured the House that they are anxious to give to Ireland. Will Mr. Lynch bring to the Magisterial Bench in Queen's County his notions of Colonial justice—his notions of justice as it is administered to the niggers? I have not the most remote doubt that, in the idea of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Assistant Secretary, a man who has administered justice to niggers is quite good enough, if not even too good, to deal with the circumstances of Ireland. My contention is that, at any rate, the Resident Magistrates ought to be lawyers capable of trying these cases in a legal and satisfactory manner. They ought to be tried in accordance with the law of this Realm, so that that justice which the Dissentient Liberals were so fond of talking about during the debate on the Coercion Bill in this House, and even more fond of talking about on various platforms throughout the country, may be duly administered. Looking further into this list, I see the name of a Mr. Vickers, and of a Mr. J. Peel of Ballinasloe, who are to receive salaries of £550 a-year, and whose only qualifications for the post are that hitherto they have had no avocation whatever. They have not even been in the Army, the Navy, or the Militia. Nevertheless, although they have never done anything in their lives, they are quite good enough to go to Ireland and receive £550 a-year for taking the side of the Government against the unfortunate people who will be brought before them. The Government have searched the Army; they have searched the Navy; they have even dredged the Militia; and they have taken men wholesale from the Constabulary. They have appointed one man who has served as one of Her Majesty's Consuls abroad, although the Return does not say in what part of the civilized or uncivilized world he has served. What guarantee can the Lord Chancellor have that these men have derived any legal knowledge or experience from any source whatever? I have no doubt that they have got a good certificate from Dublin Castle, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) may say that the Colonial Consul displayed distinguished abilities abroad; but how that assertion can be made to fit in with a proper legal knowledge and training for the administration of the law of Ireland, so as to enable him to deal with a new Coercion Bill involving nice and delicate points of law, I am unable to apprehend. For instance, the Law of Conspiracy may be constantly evaded by the Constabulary officers, who will be in a position to bring charges against the unfortunate and ignorant Irish peasantry. What qualifications can a Consul to Her Majesty possess for dealing with such nice and difficult questions of law? I have shown that among the Resident Magistrates are gentlemen from the Army, from the Navy, and from the Militia; a gentleman who has been a Consul abroad, others who have had no avocation at all, and now I come to those who claim to have some knowledge of the law—namely, barristers. Out of the entire number of magistrates whose names appear in this list I find there are only five practising barristers. We have a great many gentlemen who are learned in the law, but they are gentlemen who never held a brief, such as the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, who, if my information is not incorrect, is himself learned in the law. Speaking as an ordinary civilian, not knowing much about the law, and not wishing to know much about it, I should certainly prefer, if I had to take my chance of being tried for any offence under this Crimes Bill, to go before a practising barrister possessing some knowledge and experience of the law rather than a man who is a mere *dilettante* barrister. A barrister without a brief is very like a man who has written a five-act tragedy, but has never seen one acted. If a manager wanted a play that was fit to be put upon the stage to-day, he would certainly not go to a man who had mearly studied dramatic writing in his closet, but would prefer to go to a man who possessed some knowledge of dramatic art. Certainly the people of Ireland will have no confidence in men who come fresh from the study without having had practical experience. It will be a matter of heart-burning for people under this Crimes Bill to find themselves brought up for summary jurisdiction before men who have had no legal training, and who possess no legal knowledge whatever. If it were not that the subject is a very serious one for the Irish people, and possibly one that may become very grave and serious as time advances, this Return would be very droll reading indeed. But we know that the tenure of office is to be at the Lord Lieutenant's pleasure, and instead of being droll reading it becomes a very serious matter indeed. I view the whole thing as a mockery of justice—as a matter which ought not to be tolerated by the House. The Committee will not forget that, on a very recent occasion, one of my hon. Colleagues, the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington), read to the House some letters which had been written to a former Lord Lieutenant by the relatives of gentlemen who were applying for the position of Resident Magistrate. I remember in one instance the incredulous query of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) when he asked—"Did he get the appointment?" and the genuine amazement of the noble Lord when my hon. Friend was able to assure him that the person in whose behalf the letter was sent did get the post for which the application was made. As a matter of fact, it has been by subterfuge and intrigue of that kind that incompetent, unskilful, unlearned, and unsuitable men have been appointed to positions of great responsibility. But whatever may have been the responsibility a couple of years ago, at the present moment the position of Resident Magistrate is one of tenfold responsibility. The Irish people are besought by the Government to become enamoured of law and order. They are perfectly ready to do so. They love justice; but they hate a sham. They have always been lovers of justice when it is administered in a pure and honest fashion; but they hate the sham which foists upon them 50 or 60 Resident Magistrates, such as I have described, to administer impartial justice among them. What respect can they have for the law when they know the character of the men who are sent to administer it? All the information contained in this Return is, as I have said, droll and amusing reading; but it is not droll or amusing to the unfortunate men who, as pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt) in the exercise of a legal right, join in combination to abstain from paying more than a certain amount of rent for a farm. What they feel is that they may be liable to be brought before one of these men, and be sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour, simply owing to the incompetency of the Resident Magistrates to deal with the case for two reasons. One, that they are deeply prejudiced, not only against the nationality, but against the social claims of the Irish people; and, secondly, because they are unacquainted with the nature of the law. The Resident Magistrate himself knows that the continuance of his appointment and his promotion depends upon the way in which he obeys the wishes of the landlords and the Government. His salary commences at £425 a-year and goes up to £550; but everything depends absolutely and entirely on the goodwill and pleasure of the Lord Lieutenant. Do not hon. Members know what that means? It means, first of all, that the appointment of these Resident Magistrates and their promotion depend entirely on the manner in which they are able to convince the Lord Lieutenant that they are carrying out their functions. Therefore, the promotion of a Resident Magistrate largely depends on the view which may be taken of the manner in which he discharges his duty by right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Front Bench opposite, and particularly by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. We know what the notions of the right hon. Gentleman are of legality, and what can be the notions of the Resident Magistrates, when there is no public opinion like there is in this country to restrain them from committing acts of oppression and tyranny? My hon. Friend the Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin gave an amusing account of the way in which the Resident Magistrates in Ireland got their appointments. It will be in the recollection of many hon. Members of the Committee that on that occasion one of the applicants was the scamp of the family—a "ne'er-do-well"—a blackguard who had only succeeded in smudging himself and his family without ever having done anything to obtain an honest livelihood. Having run his rake's progress up to a certain pitch he thought he would get married and settled down, and become a God-fearing citizen. Therefore, he fixed his eye on a certain lady, who, according to the testimony of a noble relative, who wrote on his behalf to the Lord Lieutenant, was good and pious, and would make a good Christian of him. This man, who had lived an idle and worthless vagabond life until the application was made on his behalf, got a letter written to the Lord Lieutenant of the day asking for the exercise of his influence, and suggesting that the position of Resident Magistrate would suit him down to the ground. Now, is not that a scandalous state of things? My hon. Friend the Member for the Harbour Division read out letter after letter which he appears to have come across in a somewhat accidental manner, having purchased them at a sale of some private papers from a library in Dublin. It is, however, often the case that the curtain is lifted for a moment, and the outside world gets a glimpse of what is going on in official places. I do not believe that the statement of my hon. Friend, and the revelations which he was able to make that evening, at all received the attention they deserved. Events come treading upon each other rapidly, and the revelations of my hon. Friend were soon passed by. If such things had occurred in England there would have been such an amount of ridicule and denunciation that the system, as soon as it had been exposed, would have been utterly swept out of existence, and this Committee would not now be asked to vote Estimates for worthless and incompetent Resident Magistrates. Although the House has permitted the system to exist for so long, I maintain that the whole thing is a scandal and a disgrace to the legislation of the country. Of course, I know that, no matter how we are able to expose the system and to show how useless and monstrous it is, hon. and right hon. Gentlemen occupying positions in the Government are here to defend it. Well, their own formidable salaries for taking part in the maladministration of Irish affairs have already been voted, and I presume they will not be too particular as to the small salaries of these men. But there is a deep lesson to be drawn from all these transactions. The lesson I venture to convey to the English people as distinctly as I possibly can is that, in addition to the ordinary Resident Magistrate, the more common type of tyrant, we have a few men occupying that position who stand out conspicuously in the list. There is a gentleman put down here as a Divisional Magistrate, who is to receive extra remuneration for the 12 months amounting to £575. I allude to Captain Plunkett, who is one of the magistrates referred to in this item under sub-head D. These Divisional Magistrates got the same extra sum last year, but we are not informed what duties they have performed to entitle them to it. I suppose that the telegram which Captain Plunkett sent to the police, ordering them to shoot down the people of Youghal, was a portion of his extra work. On this point I maintain that the Government have been guilty of conduct which an ordinary man of the world would regard as suspicious. Certainly the epithet of truth will not apply to it. Captain Plunkett sent a telegram from Dublin to the Police Inspector at Youghal, ordering the police to shoot down the people; but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, when the matter was brought to his attention, gave the House to understand that the reason why that telegram was despatched was to prevent a collision between the police and the people. Now, what are we to think of the right hon. Gentleman's contention when we now know that that telegram was private, that the police were anxious to keep it private, and tried to do so; but that somehow or other it leaked out, and a Cork paper published the telegram? So indignant was Captain Plunkett with the maladroitness of his own Inspector that an inquiry was set on foot, and a reward of £50 offered to anyone who would give information as to the means by which the telegram was made public. Nevertheless, in spite of the anxiety of Captain Plunkett and the police to keep the telegram private, and notwithstanding the inquiry which was afterwards set on foot, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary came down to that Table and gravely informed the House that the telegram was sent in order that it might be made as public as possible. The words of the right hon. Gentleman will bear no other construction. If the telegram was intended to be made as public as possible, how was it not made known at once in Youghal that the police had been instructed to proceed with murderous and merciless severity? If that was the object, why, when Captain Plunkett sent down the telegram, was it not immediately published by the Police Authorities who were in charge of the town? If that course had been taken the people would have gathered around their parish priest, they would have known that such a telegram had been sent, they would have been aware that it was intended to act with merciless rigour and severity, and the killing of the unfortunate man, O'Hanlon, would probably not have taken place. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that the telegram was sent down in order to prevent a collision between the people and the police. It did not prevent a collision; and why was that? Because the telegram itself was a direct incentive to the police to act in a murderous manner. On that occasion the unfortunate man O'Hanlon, a Youghal fisherman, was stabbed in the back when he was running away. Is it the duty of a police officer, when he sees a man running away, to chase him and drive a deadly weapon through his back? I think that that very significant fact contains a whole volume in itself. No matter what Captain Plunkett does as a Divisional Magistrate, no matter who he chooses to shoot, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary does not hesitate to come down here and defend his action. Not with fair and legitimate argument merely, but with underhand and most disingenuous assertion. There was no necessity for the telegram whatever; but the telegram having been sent, if it had been made public, and was intended to be made public, I would freely allow that there is some substance in the contention of the right hon. Gentleman. But the telegram was sent in cipher, and its contents were known only to Captain Plunkett and the recipient, or supposed to be known only to them. I think that fact throws a deadly light upon the conduct of Captain Plunkett, and upon the apology of his apologist—the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. It is a lamentable state of things that a man like Captain Plunkett should be allowed to exercise jurisdiction in Ireland; it is a terrible state of affairs. Let any English Member in this Committee imagine for a moment a similar state of things occurring in England; let them imagine that a strike had broken out in the North, and that the foreman of the works was on the side of the strikers in the object they sought to carry out. Suppose that in such circumstances a strong body of police was sent down, and a large force of military held in reserve; that, in the disturbances which subsequently followed, at the very worst, a few threepenny panes of glass were broken; that not a single police constable was able to show any marks of ill-usage, or declared that he had sustained any injury whatever. Imagine that such a thing had occurred in England, and that the disorder was confined entirely to shouting and hallooing, and to the breaking of a few windows, and that all this occurred while a large crowd of people were in the streets. Of course there are no Resident Magistrates here; but what would hon. Members say if Sir Charles Warren had sent down an order to the local constabulary officer to "Shoot down the people; do not hesitate to fire into them?" Would he have been allowed to retain his position for 24 hours longer? He would have been compelled to retire in disgrace without a pension, and his conduct would have met with the execration of every member of the community. That is what would have occurred if this outrage had happened in England. But in Ireland it is regarded as part of the ordinary duty of the police, and the District Inspector is complimented upon his good conduct. I have felt it my duty to call the attention of the Committee, and of the House generally, to the proceedings of Captain Plunkett, and his arbitrary, illegal, and indefensible conduct in Ireland. All I will add is that if such a man is retained in his present position, a heavy responsibility will rest on the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. He may think lightly of the matter to-day; but, to quote an old saying, he is at present in the position of "a young bear with all his troubles before him." All I can say is that the responsibility of whatever disaster may occur in Ireland through the action of such men as Captain Plunkett will fall on the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and Her Majesty's Government, who retain persons of this kind in office. I have shown the Committee what class of men the Resident Magistrates are, and what sort of a man the Divisional Magistrate—Captain Plunkett—is; and if, instead of law and order being less respected than it is at present, you have more difficulty in maintaining it, you will have to blame such men as Captain Plunkett, and such Ministerial apologists as the right hon. Gentleman, who hesitates to adopt that fair and legitimate course of argument which is alone honourable to a Member of the Government.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The hon. Member has been good enough to describe my conduct in this House as disingenuous and underhand. I will not inquire how far, in such circumstances, it deserves a reply, and how far the use of the language of that kind is in order in our debates. Before using such language the hon. Member ought, at all events, to have taken the precaution of seeing that he was himself accurately stating the elementary facts of the case to which he was calling the attention of the Committee. The hon. Gentleman has told us two alleged facts in regard to the recent occurrences at Youghal, both of which are entirely inaccurate, and both of which are, as I understand, necessary to the hon. Member's case. One is that nobody was injured except the man who was killed.

MR. FLYNN: Not seriously injured.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member must be aware that I have on more than one occasion stated that many policemen were struck, and three considerably injured, by the stones thrown at them. The hon. Member has further stated, in direct contradiction to what has been told to the House on Ministerial authority, that the telegram to Captain Plunkett was sent under conditions which insured its privacy. One of the statements I have made to the House was that the telegram was sent under such conditions that it would immediately leak out—as it did, in fact, leak out. The hon. Member says that the telegram was in cipher. The telegram was not sent in cipher, and the statement I made to the House was perfectly correct. The telegram was not only justified in itself, but was further justified by the fact that it was certain to leak out, and that the result of its being made public would undoubtedly be to prevent an attack on the police. The hon. Gentleman went so far, I think, as to say that if the telegram had not been sent in cipher the man O'Hanlon would not have been killed.

MR. FLYNN: Oh, no; I did not say that. I said that the telegram was made public, and that it was of such a character that it naturally led the Nationalist Party to apprehend some possible violence.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understood the hon. Member in some way to connect Hanlon with the telegram. If, however, I misunderstood him I will withdraw that part of my argument. I will only take the opportunity of reasserting in this House that Captain Plunkett's action in this matter was absolutely justifiable, and resulted in stopping scenes which might, and probably would, under other circumstances, have resulted in bloodshed and possible loss of life. Leaving the case of Captain Plunkett, and going to the earlier part of the hon. Member's speech—namely, the part in which he contended at great length that there is a want of proper qualifications in the Resident Magistrates to administer the law in Ireland, and especially the Criminal Law Amendment Act, the hon. Member appears to be extremely hard to please. He will not admit that a man who has served in the Colonies is qualified to administer the law in Ireland. On the contrary, as I understand the hon. Gentleman, he seems to draw a distinction between justice as it is administered abroad and as it is administered at home, for he asks—"Are Irishmen only to be treated to Colonial justice?" I apprehend that justice is justice everywhere, and that if a man is qualified to administer justice in the Colonies, he is equally qualified to administer it in England, Scotland, Ireland, or anywhere else. Not only does the hon. Member object to the unfitness of a Resident

Magistrate who comes from the Colonies, but he takes exception also to everybody who has been a soldier, to everybody who has been a sailor, to everybody who has had no avocation at all; but, not satisfied with that, he has also attacked the appointment of barristers.

Mr. FLYNN: May I explain that I objected only to those who were not practising barristers?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member would apparently be content with a barrister in large practice.

Mr. FLYNN: Certainly.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, you cannot get a barrister in large practice to accept Resident Magistrateship at £400 a-year. If the Government were to restrict themselves to the supply of men furnished by the Irish Bar they would deliberately deprive themselves of many of the best qualified gentlemen whose services are at their disposal. I and my Predecessors in the Office of Chief Secretary are of opinion that probably the very best policy is to draw them largely from the Army. I believe that from that source you will get men better qualified to serve you at £400, £500, or £600 a-year, than you will if you restrict yourselves to the unsuccessful barristers at the Irish Bar. It is better to have a successful soldier than an unsuccessful barrister. I am ready to admit, however, that wherever circumstances enable us to obtain the services of a barrister who has shown that he possessed legal knowledge we ought to try to avail ourselves of his services, and, in point of fact, the proportion of barristers now acting as Resident Magistrates is far larger than it was in the time of Lord Spencer. The hon. Member has passed a condemnation on the general qualifications of these Resident Magistrates. I believe that they have rendered great and valuable services in the past, and that they are qualified to render similar services to the State in the future. On this point I would advise the hon. Member to refer to the opinion expressed in public by Lord Spencer, and by the right hon. Gentleman the present Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan). The hon. Member has drawn largely on the speech made by the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin (Mr. T. C. Harrington) in the earlier part of the Session, and has asked how the Government could possibly think of appointing men of the character described by the hon. Member to the position of Resident Magistrates. Perhaps the Committee will allow me to recall what happened on that occasion. The hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin called attention to certain circumstances which occurred 30 years ago, and read out to the House certain letters of an amusing description that he had obtained at an auction of the effects of a gentleman who had been Secretary to a Liberal Lord Lieutenant, and he implied to the House that all the gentlemen to whom the letters referred had been appointed Resident Magistrates.

Mr. FLYNN: Some of them.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: When he was challenged on the subject by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), the hon. Gentleman said that some of those gentlemen—I think he said all—had been appointed. Now, this is not the first time that the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin has shown very great readiness of resource in matters of assertion. [*Cries of* "Order!"] Any hon. Member opposite can rise to Order if he likes. As a matter of fact, on this particular occasion the hon. Member was labouring under a grave misapprehension.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): A few hours ago, Mr. Courtney, you ruled that an hon. Member was out of Order in accusing another hon. Member of the same thing as the right hon. Gentleman is now accusing my hon. Friend. May I ask whether it is in Order to speak of my hon. Friend as having a readiness of resource in matters of assertion?

The CHAIRMAN: The right hon. Gentleman is, no doubt, going very near the limit of disorder, but I think the right hon. Gentleman is entitled to proceed.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: What I was going to say was this—that the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin was entirely in error when he made that statement. I have inquired into the cases, and I am informed that not one of the gentlemen recommended in the letters which the hon. Member read to the House was appointed by the Liberal Lord Lieutenant to the post of Resident Magistrate.

MR. SEXTON: I know of one instance myself.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am informed that there was one gentleman appointed of the same name, but it was not the gentleman on whose behalf the letter was written to the Lord Lieutenant. Speaking generally, I do not think it will be possible to improve the qualifications of the class of men who now fill the responsible position of Resident Magistrates in Ireland. I believe that they have in the past, and that they will continue in the future to discharge to the satisfaction of the House and of the country the responsible duties which have been entrusted to them.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.): I must congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on his readiness of assertion, and also upon the readiness of his instruments, the Dublin Castle officials, who supply him with the information which from time to time we receive in this House. I have listened carefully to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman this evening, as I have done on many previous occasions. The right hon. Gentleman seems to have made up his mind before taking the Office of Chief Secretary that everything was right, and that he had only to carry out to the uttermost the proposals of the detestable gang who rule in Dublin Castle, whose conduct in respect to the men for whom this Vote is asked to-night has been constantly shown up in this House. From the beginning to the end of this Vote there are points which could be raised and which ought to be raised. Unfortunately, we are approaching the end of the Session; and our time being well nigh spent the amount of attention which the Vote ought to receive cannot possibly be devoted to it. It is, therefore, impossible for us in this matter to do justice to the constituents who sent us here. We may, however, do something to endeavour to alleviate their sufferings and prevent gross injustice and shameful wrong from being inflicted upon them. The principal item of the Vote to which the attention of the House has been this evening directed is the item for the magistrates—notably for Special Magistrates and Resident Magistrates. Again and again in previous Sessions of Parliament has the conduct of these men, who have always been the partizans of one section of the people — the landocracy — been shown up, and I, for one, have repeatedly endeavoured, in my own way, to show it up. I regret that I have not that readiness of expression and happiness of phraseology which some of my hon. Friends possess, and that I cannot, accordingly, deal with these matters in the way in which I should like to deal with them. But I have known—and have known from my youth upwards—during all that part of my time which I have spent in Ireland, the character and conduct of these Resident Magistrates, and I can assure the Committee that whenever there is any little job to be done on the part of the landlords in Ireland these men are invariably consulted. In my own district—Macroom—what happens? Let me instance the case of Mr. James Gallagher in the Ardilaun district. Being desirous of getting his rents he wrote a letter to Captain Stokes, who went to the County Club on the Saturday afternoon, and there and then the two settled the whole business between them. This kind of "hugger-muggering" goes on Saturday after Saturday; and let me say that I only speak of what I have heard and seen, and it certainly goes beyond what hon. Members generally can have any idea of. When we raise specific issues as to the mode in which these men exercise their administrative functions the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary—who appears to have made up his mind at the outset—refuses to give us a hearing, although one of the cases we are anxious to direct attention to is the murder at Youghal, which strongly stirred up the feeling of the people in this country in reference to the unfortunate Irish people. When the circumstance was brought before the House the right hon. Gentleman rose, on the occasion, with a laugh—a laugh which I hope his constituents will remember and the country will bear in mind on the first opportunity that may arise. The right hon. Gentleman ought to have felt that the life of a poor fisherman of Youghal was deserving of as much care and as much attention, and that there ought to be as much pity shown for his case as there would have been if he was one of the lords of the land. If there is anything that could make the people of Ireland naturally indignant and exasperated, it is the fact that a poor fisherman was wantonly slain in the streets of Youghal in consequence of the violence—the insane and senseless violence—of the officials of the Department now under consideration. The name of Captain Plunkett has been brought under the notice of the House again and again. Who is Captain Plunkett? Why was he appointed? He served for a short time in the Army; but his name does not appear in the Return because he is a Divisional Magistrate, and not a Resident Magistrate. I happen to know all about Captain Plunkett, however, and on other occasions I have endeavoured to enlighten the House as to what he is. He is now a Divisional Magistrate; he was taken from the Army, but he does not appear to have achieved any great or glorious position while in that position. He handles the billiard cue much better than the sword; and I have not heard that since he left the Army he has distinguished himself much better with the pen than with the sword. With the billiard cue, however, he certainly is accomplished. The greatest exploit of Captain Plunkett's was in the City of Cork, in days gone by, when he drove a tamdem down a steep hill at full gallop. Fortunately for the gallant Captain, he did not break his neck on that occasion, nor that of a relative of mine who accompanied him. He is an extremely bad-tempered man, and it is deplorable that such a man should be placed in the position of Divisional Magistrate, in charge of three of the most important counties of Ireland—Cork, Kerry and Limerick. With a bad-tempered man in charge of those three counties it cannot be surprising that you occasionally have such cases as that of O'Hanlon. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General laughs, but it is not a laughable matter. With the liability of such cases as that of O'Hanlon occurring in the district, it is much to be deplored that such a man as Captain Plunkett should be in charge of it. I recollect an instance which occurred this time last year, when two of my hon. Friends were returned for the City of Cork. Captain Plunkett was in the billiard room of the County Club at the time the announcement of their return was made, and in a fit of passion he at once broke his billiard cue across his knee, and threw it to the other side of the room. On another occasion Captain Plunkett, acting upon the powers with which he was entrusted, proclaimed a meeting which I was to have attended at Youghal. We heard a great deal about Youghal in the autumn of last year. I ought to know something about Youghal. I have been for a long time in the district, and I know that the town of Youghal is one of the most peaceful, quiet, and tranquil towns in Ireland, and that it was in the centre of one of the most peaceful districts in the South, until Captain Plunkett succeeded in stirring up bad feeling and inciting to disturbance and disorder. I trust that that was not the reason why he was sent there. On the occasion to which I refer a meeting was called in connection with the evictions on the Ponsonby estate, and the night before the meeting was to take place, Captain Plunkett sent down a bundle of bills, drawn up the night before, proclaiming the meeting; and this is a matter to which I feel it necessary to enforce attention. Captain Plunkett and other magistrates, who have plenty of time at their disposal, have never proclaimed a meeting until shortly before it is going to be held, and the precedent of Captain Plunkett is what was practically adopted the other day in County Clare. In consequence of his well-know predilection for this mode of proceeding, the gallant captain has obtained the name of "Paste Pot Plunkett" in the South of Ireland. As it was, at the last moment that the meeting at Youghal was proclaimed people naturally got indignant. When a meeting has been proclaimed, a large body of police is sent down—which is another mistake, because when the people have become indignant there is sometimes a row, and when there is a row, the police charge the people, and generally a number of persons are hurt. I mention this as a deplorable fact, and I certainly attribute it to the known predilection of this man, Plunkett, for this particular mode of procedure in these matters. On the occasion I am referring to at Youghal, he proclaimed the meeting on the night before. Having fortunately heard of it, and exercising a little discretion, I was able on that day to address no less than about five meetings in and about the district. To show the stupidity of Captain Plunkett, I may say that he proclaimed the town of Youghal, but he never dreamt of proclaiming the County of Waterford, which is on the other side of the water. Accordingly I went from Youghal, met a number of my friends, and told them that Captain Plunkett had proclaimed the County of Cork; but he had no power whatever to proclaim the County of Waterford, seeing that he is only Divisional Magistrate for the counties of Cork, Kerry, and Limerick. Therefore, all we had to do was to get a ferry boat and go across the river to hold meetings in the County of Waterford, which we accordingly did, much to Captain Plunkett's disgust. Generally Captain Plunkett contrives to gloss over his stupidity, but he invariably acts with increased brutality on the next occasion. I certainly think that his conduct and character ought to be inquired into. Even the unfortunate "shadows" who follow him about—I can assure the Committee that I have had some of these men under my own personal care—are nearly worried to death owing to the abnormal hours the gallant captain affects. Of course, when he has a game of cards, or a billiard match in hand, he does not like to break up the game until he has made his money, and in that way, or in his attendance on married ladies, he keeps the persons who follow him about up all night till they break down in health.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to moderate his language. The hon. Member must remember what is due to the House of Commons.

DR. TANNER: I always remember what is due to the House of Commons; but I could not help adverting, in passing, in the mildest manner, to the well-known character of Captain Plunkett in the County of Cork. But Captain Plunkett does not stand alone. There are many others of the same class. The Committee were told by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary just now that there could be no better men for the position of magistrates than gentlemen who have graduated in the Army. I think that is a singular admission—a very cynical and sinister admission on the part of the right hon. Gentleman. If it were necessary to hold drumhead courts martial upon the people, of course it would be very well to get military officers to conduct them. But if you wish to deal with the people in a legal way, you should appoint men who are capable of reasoning and bringing a certain amount of technical knowledge to bear upon the cases brought before them. I should certainly say—looking at the matter from a plain, common-sense point of view—that a soldier cannot be the best man to appoint. We know that soldiers are generally gentlemen who have a certain number of aristocratic relatives. This is the case with Captain Plunkett, Captain Stokes, Mr. Warburton, Mr. Carew, and others. If hon. Members will run their eye over the list of Resident Magistrates they must see that the way in which most of these military magistrates have been appointed is a job is consequence of their having aristocratic connections, who want to pension off their poor relations upon the State. I could give the Committee dozens of instances. A man is sent into the Army, and after serving for a time, a noble or distinguished relative looks out for a comfortable berth for him. I remember a case which occurred in the City of Cork not long ago. The relatives of one gentleman there—poor fellow, he is dead now—simply because he happened to be a bankrupt, worked Heaven and earth to get a Resident Magistracy for him. His name was put down upon the list for such a post, but, unfortunately, before his turn came round he died. The sooner all of them are superannuated—I will not say dead—the better. No doubt these gentlemen may be pleasant men to meet socially—Captain Plunkett is pleasant enough, socially—except that he uses too much patchouli. The present right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has had very little experience of these matters. He only met the Divisional Magistrates the other day for the first time, and even then only a select few, and Captain Plunkett was one of them. As to Captain Stokes, he is a Resident Magistrate; he has been in the Army, and his age when he was appointed was 37. He is stationed at Blarney in the County of Cork; originally, he had £300 a year, and he now gets £550. I am afraid I shall feel it my duty to wind up my remarks by moving the reduction of the Vote by the amount of Captain Stokes' salary. I am sorry that I should have to mention so many facts that are really to the discredit of the Irish Magistracy, but there are so many things to object to in them in their personal character. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has expressed unqualified approbation of Resident Magistrates who have graduated in the Army. Now, there has been a great deal of disturbance in the district in which Captain Stokes is placed. Again and again I have brought cases before the House in connection with the action of Captain Stokes, and I propose now to call attention to two or three of the various cases which I have brought forward. Not long ago a man named Timothy Buckley was charged before a Bench of Magistrates —I think it was on the 27th of April last—with attacking the dwelling-house of a man named Farrell, and with presenting a revolver at Farrell's head. Now, it is not everybody who is allowed to go about the streets armed with a revolver, and this man, Buckley, was a notoriously bad character. There had been a previous conviction against him, and he was deemed a rowdy in every sense of the word. I endeavoured to obtain some information from the right hon. Gentleman whose duty it is to answer Questions dealing with these points, but no information could I get. Buckley was in the employ as an emergency man of the Cork Defence Union, with the members of which Captain Stokes was on intimate terms. Buckley was brought before the Magistrates, Captain Stokes and Mr. Lynch, when it was clearly proved that he had the revolver, that he drew it upon this old man, the owner of the dwelling-house that was attacked, and his two daughters. It was also proved that another of the persons who was charged with Buckley had undergone confinement for a term of five years in the County of Cork. Captain Stokes admitted that the evidence given satisfied the Bench that these emergency men had committed the offence with which they were charged. But what happened on that occasion? Captain Stokes, although he said that the outrage ought not to have been committed, refused to send the case for trial, and the other Magistrate, Mr. Lynch, disagreeing with that decision, said that such downright blackguardism ought not to go unpunished. That is case No. 1 against Captain Stokes. Captain Stokes was on the Bench not merely performing a magisterial function, but he was there also as a friend and admirer of the Cork Defence Union. He is altogether one of the Club, and he really lives there when in the County of Cork. It could hardly be expected that a man enjoying favouritism of that kind would go and desert his friends, or when an opportunity arose, would not stand up for them. It was a case of—"If you will scratch me, I will scratch you." Case No. 2 occurred in the Ballyvourneen district on the 20th May last. Captain Stokes was on the Bench with a well known man—I am sorry I cannot call him a gentleman — Jeremiah Hafferty. On that occasion an unfortunate old man, who did not know a word of English, and whose name was Casey, was brought before the Bench in consequence of some small row that had occurred in the neighbourhood. What did Captain Stokes say from the Bench about that unfortunate old man? The remark he made was—"The old gentleman appears to have been a fighting old rascal." Now, is that language which any magistrate ought to make use of? I am only giving the Committee one or two instances to show the kind of magistrate Captain Stokes is; but, if I were so disposed, I could take up the time of the Committee for hours in giving instances as to the way in which this gentleman deals with the cases which are brought before him. An Irish-speaking witness gave evidence on behalf of Casey, which was improperly interpreted by the Court. A neophite, under the control of Captain Stokes, performed the task of interpreter, and his interpretation was objected to on the ground that it was an improper translation of the evidence given on behalf of the prisoner. It was then that Captain Stokes turned round, in a laughing way, and spoke of Casey being "a fighting old rascal." On a subsequent occasion, some other persons were brought before the Ballyvourneen Bench of Magistrates—third cousins of Mr. Haggerty—who were charged with throwing stones at some houses belonging a person they did not like, and with creating a disturbance. In that case, of course, there was no rule; it is only when a case is preferred against one of the people that Captain Stokes shines.

I implore the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to look into the conduct of these magistrates in a more independent spirit than he has yet displayed. I ask him to make an inquiry from all sides. I do not want a sort of left-handed inquiry. Of course, if you inquire from one official what the action of another official is one will back up the other. We have had that demonstrated over and over again to the satisfaction of all sane and moderate individuals. But I say that these men, whose conduct I have impeached—and shall be prepared to impeach whenever an opportunity is afforded to me—are manifestly unfit to discharge the duties of magistrates. Their conduct stands indicted before the House, and I invite the right hon. Gentleman, if he is really desirous of having law and order respected in Ireland, to do something in the matter. Only about three months ago another point occurred in reference to Captain Stokes and the administration of justice. The Macroom band has been in the habit of performing on Saturday evening in the square of Macroom. Some evictions were threatened in the district about six miles from Macroom. A meeting was called, but although it was postponed, it was proclaimed; and the authorities would not allow the band to go into the square to play, as usual, because a meeting had been proclaimed six miles off. What would be said in England if such an occurrence happened? If a man in this country, filling a similar position to that which is occupied by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary in connection with Ireland, prevented a band from performing for the amusement of the town's people, he would be overwhelmed with ridicule and contempt. I contend that the way in which these men act is absurd and contemptible. They conduct themselves as tyrants and despots; and I presume it is because the Irish Representatives are now determined in every possible way to show up their actions, that we are refused an investigation into the circumstances of the cases which we have brought before the House. I shall not trespass further upon the time of the House, nor shall I at the present moment move a reduction of the Vote. I hope, however, to receive from the right hon. Gentleman some answer to the cases I have quoted, and to get from him an assurance that in the fulfilment of his function he will command an investigation to be made into these matters. He will certainly do so if he is desirous to see the winter pass over our heads tranquilly—as I sincerely hope it will—and by so doing he will do something to guard the sacred cause of law and order.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.): Having had some experience of the manner in which the magistrates appointed in Ireland perform their duty, I have come to the conclusion that they are utterly unfit for the posts they occupy. Mention has been made by my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) of the conduct of Captain Stokes on various occasions. Perhaps I may be allowed to relate to the Committee an extraordinary incident which relates to the conduct of Captain Stokes and Mr. Warburton, another Resident Magistrate, which incident no one in this House will be prepared to deny. Immediately after the passing of the Crimes Act of 1882 I presided at a meeting in my native town of Bantry, which is part of the Division of Cork I now represent. After the meeting was held I was served with a summons, as also was the present Mayor of Cork and the Chairman of the Board of Guardians. Three hours after the case came on for trial; Captain Stokes and Mr. Eaton, who conducted the trial, adjourned for luncheon to the home of Mr. Warburton, the Resident Magistrate, and the question was there discussed of the sentence which the accused persons should receive. Captain Stokes proposed that I should get six months, and the other two three months each; but Mr. Warburton remonstrated, and said three months for me and two months each for the others. The trial went on, and, after three days, the very sentence which was settled at the luncheon on the first day was awarded; I got three months and my friends two months. I did not care about the imprisonment at all; it did not take a feather out of me. I felt that I was only doing my duty to the people who are now my constituents, but what I do complain of is that these gentlemen should have arranged at luncheon the punishment I was to get two days afterwards. I have called upon Mr. Warburton, from my place in this House, to contradict a statement I made in reference to the action of Captain Stokes and Mr. Eaton on another occasion. A friend of Mr. Warburton, well known in the town, has said that I acted very ungratefully towards that gentleman, seeing that he had on the previous occasion taken three months off my imprisonment. I replied that it was entirely upon public grounds that I acted. The case was Regina against Michael Walsh, Thomas Culler, and Robert Kelly, the last two of whom were charged with threatening to shoot the gamekeeper of the Earl of Kenmare on the 11th of January last. In the first place, one of the witnesses who saw the attempted shooting spoke to the men having their faces blackened and that he was consequently unable to recognize them; but he heard a shot fired. In the month of February this witness made a further deposition to the effect that he saw two men go towards the gamekeeper, and when about 20 yards off, as far as he could judge, he saw the two men. He spoke to one of them, whose face was coloured black, but he received no answer. He then saw the man put his hat on the ground, and go down on his knee. He had a gun in his hand. "That man," he added, "I identify as Robert Kelly." Yet this man had sworn that he did not know either of the men because their faces were blackened. In cross-examination the witness admitted that he had been accused of homicide, and that he had suffered 12 months' imprisonment for sheep stealing. In the case of which I have been speaking, the prosecution was in the end withdrawn. Now, what I complain of is that these young men, who belonged to respectable families, had been imprisoned and sent for trial on the information of a man who was notoriously one of the worst characters in the whole district. The Attorney General saw at once that it was not a case to send before a jury, and he at once had it withdrawn, and I believe that both of the accused subsequently received licences to carry guns. It was monstrously unjust, in my opinion, on the part of Mr. Warburton to keep these young men for five months in gaol, and afterwards to grant them gun licenses. It turned out subsequently that another bailiff of Lord Kenmare brought Keown—the witness—to the accused men, and pointed out who he was to swear against. That is how the prosecution was got up against two respectable young men by the family of Keown, who were known to be the most dishonest and disreputable family in the whole parish. I think that some supervision ought to be exercized over the action of Mr. Warburton, and that he should not be allowed to proceed with impunity against persons whom the landlords and their agents happen to have a grudge against. I am afraid that the system of tyranny which prevails in this part of Ireland only tends to aggravate the people, and that it fails to secure their respect for the administration of justice. Let me mention another case in which Mr. Warburton was concerned—the case of the son of a landlord named O'Donovan, who was caught Moonlighting and knocking down fences, but was only fined 2*s.* 6*d.* Another person, brought into court for attempted murder, had attacked a small boy and thrown him into a pool of water. If another man had not been coming up the road, the boy would have been strangled or drowned. Yet the offender only got three months' imprisonment, instead of the case being sent to the Assizes for trial.

Mr. SEXTON: Who was the magistrate?

Mr. GILHOOLY: The same gentleman—Mr. Warburton. In another case—for throwing stones—Mr. Warburton returned the prisoners for trial at the Cork Assizes, but the Crown Prosecutor withdrew the information, and let the men out on their own recognizances. Persons are imprisoned because they oppose the landlords and give them annoyance. It is time, in my judgment, for this scandal to be put a stop to, and it is with that object that I have called the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) and the Government to it. Before any man is imprisoned the right hon. and learned Gentleman should peruse the information, and not allow the Resident Magistrates in small country towns to obey the behests of the landlords.

Mr. DEASY (Mayo, W.): I desire to add my protest against the way in which the Resident Magistrates perform their duties. I have had some experience of the action of Captain Stokes in the South of Ireland; but before I enter into the conduct of that gentleman, I desire to call the attention of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to some circumstances which have recently occurred in the Island of Achill on the West Coast of Mayo. Last summer, some few individuals in that Island were induced to lay a sworn information about a conspiracy which was alleged to have been hatched there. Now, the unfortunate peasantry of the Island of Achill and the West of Mayo are about as quiet and and simple-minded a people as are to be found in the whole of Ireland. Their only desire is to be allowed to carry on their fishing and grazing in peace. The Island is barren and sterile, and as a class they are much impoverished. Nevertheless they are contented, and by no means disorderly. The result of the information sworn against them, was that a large force of police was drafted there on the application of the Resident Magistrate, and week after week a Special Court was held to inquire into the state of things which existed on the Island. The people became utterly paralyzed, and got into such a state of fright that the parish priest, the Rev. Father O'Connor, had to send to Dublin and bring down an experienced barrister for the purpose of making an application to the Resident Magistrate to get rid of the police force. The remonstrances against the conduct of the authorities had such an effect that the police were withdrawn, and an interval was allowed to elapse. I have since received letters stating that the same kind of terrorism on the part of the Resident Magistrate has been renewed; and that it has extended beyond the Island of Achill, and that the people of Westport and Newport have been subjected to the same sort of annoyance. I therefore ask the right hon. and learned Attorney General if he will cause some inquiry to be instituted into the course which has been pursued in this remote part of Western Mayo? I presume that the Resident Magistrates of Ireland, like all other people who have to do with the administration of justice in that country, are under the control of the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): The matter is not under my control, but under that of the Chief Secretary.

MR. DEASY: The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary then, or somebody, must be accountable to this House for the way in which the Resident Magistrates discharge their duty. Let me assume it is that the Chief Secretary. I suppose, at any rate, that the right hon. and learned Attorney General will advise the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, although he may not be directly responsible to the House for what may have been done by these gentlemen. Let me ask hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite what may be the effect of this constant annoyance on the part of the authorities down in Mayo and elsewhere, if there is any real desire to bring about a peaceable state of affairs, and I hope they will instruct the Resident Magistrates and County Court Judges not to avail themselves of every opportunity of irritating the people. When I was down there, a short time ago, I did my best to bring the people into a state of mind that would enable them to bear the undue, terrible, and wanton provocation they were receiving at the hands of the authorities. This is not the only part of the irritation which is carried on by the authorities, because I understand that, even although the people have taken our advice, the police authorities, the Resident Magistrates, and others have become worse and worse since. Ever since the Coercion Bill passed, these men believe that they have nothing to do but to ride roughshod over the people. They are in daily communication with men like Stoney, whose conduct I brought before the House the other day, when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary admitted that many of the charges I brought against him were true, and that he had been guilty of wilful neglect, if not of something worse. These magistrates are the constant companions of such men as Stoney, and the result of this constant association with local landlords who are unable to get their rents, owing to the bad weather the farmers in the West have had to contend against, together with the fall of prices which has affected the farmers more in the West of Ireland than elsewhere, is that they have an undue sympathy with the landlords in their relations with the tenants. I would suggest to the right hon. and learned Attorney General and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, to consider whether it is not desirable, in the interests of justice, to pass some new rule, or even an Act of Parliament, to guard against the possibility of the magistrates getting on too familiar terms with the landlords, by shifting them from one part of the country to another every six or 12 months. Such a course as that would, I think, have an immediate beneficial effect upon the constitution of the Magisterial Bench in Ireland. They would not, in that case, be the mere creatures they now are of the local gentry of the country. The magistrates would be stationed for too short a time in any one particular district to enable the landlords to acquire an entire mastery over them. I will put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether, if he had a Resident Magistrate, living close to his own house, dining night after night at his table, and any cases concerning his tenantry were brought before the Court presided over by that magistrate, would it not be natural to suppose, not that the magistrate would knowingly strain the law in favour of the right hon. Gentleman, but that his mind would be biased in some way so that it would be almost impossible for him to come to a fair decision in any case affecting the relation between landlord and tenant? If that were not so in the case of these landlords he would at once be Boycotted by the gentlemen he is in the habit of dining with, who would, in all probability, make the place so hot for him that he would have to apply for his removal from the district. I maintain that the only way of remedying this evil is to shift these magistrates around the country every six months, or at least every 12 months. That would to some extent — I do not say that it would wholly — remove the evil, and would secure the better administration of justice in the country. I feel most strongly upon the way in which the people have been treated in the West of Ireland, and I contend that this is the only way of getting out of the difficulty. My hon. Friend the Member for North Cork (Mr. Flynn) referred to the conduct of Captain Plunkett in proclaiming meetings. We shall probably hear a good deal upon that subject during the next six or eight months. I should, therefore, like to give some idea of my experience in connection with the proclamation of meetings, and I should like to show the Government what they may expect from the exercise of this power by the Resident Magistrates. It may be in contemplation to hold a perfectly legal and lawful meeting of the people of a particular district; but under certain conditions the Government are to be justified in preventing public meetings, provided the placard convening the meeting is drawn up in such a manner as to show that it is possible a breach of the peace may take place. Now, I have never heard of such a meeting, and I absolutely deny that any notice convening a meeting issued by any branch of the Irish National League, or the Land League before them, could have induced any man in his senses to believe that the promoters of the meeting desired in any way to lead up to a breach of the peace, or to any illegality. I remember, under the Crimes Act of 1882, the way in which these Proclamations were issued. I entirely agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) when he says that although a week or 10 days' notice may have been given of a meeting, and the fact was well known to the authorities, the magistrates have not stepped in to proclaim the meeting until late on the Saturday night—the night before the meeting was fixed to take place. Surely if a meeting is announced 10 or 11 days before, the Government have ample notice of it, and can get all their information sworn, as they were obliged to do under the Act of 1882, to show that the meeting is likely to be dangerous. They would be able to have a telegram down to prohibit the meeting in sufficient time to prevent any large gathering of the people, because, under the circumstances, they would be indisposed to attend it. Instead of taking that course, at 2 o'clock or 3 o'clock on the Sunday morning a Proclamation is posted up on the dead walls of the town in which the meeting is to be held, which can have no other object than to bring the people into collision with the police, and bring about the shedding of blood, so that in fear of a massacre the people of Ireland may be terrorized into abstaining from daring to holding a meeting. I believe that this has been the deliberate object of Captain Plunkett and other gentlemen who have had to do with the administration of the law in Ireland, and who have, unfortunately, yet to do with it. I trust, in the interests of this country, as well as of Ireland, that, at any rate, when the Government make up their minds that a meeting shall not take place, they will order the Resident Magistrates to give due notice to the people that such meeting will not be permitted by the Government, and that it will, if necessary, be dispersed by force. But what is likely to happen the very moment this House is prorogued, which I presume will take place in the course of another fortnight? We know very well what the authority is which is given to the Lord Lieutenant, and we know what is likely to be the authority given to men like Captain Plunkett. We know that only the other day a resolution, signed by 21 magistrates of the City of Cork, comprising men of all shades of opinion, was sent up to the Chief Secretary; but the right hon. Gentleman altogether disregarded the resolution, and preferred to take the advice of Captain Plunkett—or if the right hon. Gentleman did not, his subordinates undoubtedly did. The consequence is that we have a man in supreme control over the lives of the people of three counties in the South of Ireland, and a man, too, who would not be allowed in England to have anything to do with the administration of justice in any part of the country at all. If there is any one man who is more thoroughly detested in Ireland than another—more thoroughly and cordially hated—and against whom there are most just complaints, it is Captain Plunkett. He is a man who was taken out of the Army —a man possessing no knowledge of the law, or of the country he is assisting to govern, and a man associated and connected with almost all the landlords in Ireland. This is the man you sent down to the South of Ireland to keep the unfortunate peasantry under control, and to prevent them from giving expression in an open and Constitutional manner to the grievances from which they suffer, and which are admitted even by the legislation of the Government themselves. I have stated that I have had some experience of a proclaimed meeting in Ireland. The sole object, I say, is to prevent the people from coming together, and giving expression to their grievances. If they are not allowed to do so at a public meeting they will do so in some other way. They have never yet been prevented from holding a public meeting; and although the police and the military have been scattered broadcast all over the country, and every wall covered with Proclamations, the people have come together, have passed resolutions, and have formed branches of the Irish National League. Some time ago the right hon. Gentleman called attention to the fact that under the Act of 1882 some of the meetings were called to form branches of the Land League, and that they were proclaimed by Lord Spencer. They were proclaimed; but before three months had elapsed Earl Spencer gave up his Proclamations, because it was found impossible for Captain Plunkett, or for Earl Spencer, with all their resources, to prevent the formation of branches of the Land League when the people were so inclined. I have attended dozens of these meetings with the detectives a few yards from my heel. Whether by day or night, we were always able to hold our meetings; we had our regular quarters, and kept minutes of our proceedings; and similar meetings will continue to be held in spite of all the Government can do. The conduct of Captain Plunkett in reference to these meetings was such that I will not attempt to characterize it. The very meeting to which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary referred at Castlelinn was a deliberate attempt to bring the people into collision with the police, and a deliberate attempt at wanton murder, such as did subsequently occur in the town of Youghal. In that case, Captain Plunkett succeeded in preventing an inquiry from being held into the conduct of the Constabulary Force—he prevented an inquiry into the kicking of a man deliberately to death. The man who committed the crime is still at large, no charge having been preferred against him. But we have met Captain Plunkett before, and have been able to defeat him, and we have no fear as to the account we shall be able to give of him in the conflict we are likely to be engaged in next year. Before I pass from Captain Plunkett, I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman one question—Under what Rule or under what Act of Parliament does Captain Plunkett receive a salary of £2,000 a-year? I understand that before the inquiry upstairs—the inquiry into the Civil Service Estimates—it was stated by the gentleman who is at the head of the Department, more than once, that the payment of £1,700 odd is an illegal payment—that the Government have never come forward here to bring in a Bill to sanction the payment of that sum. What I want to know is whether the Committee are asked to-night to vote £2,000 to Captain Plunkett, without any justification in law for the charge, and contrary to the usage of this House? That is a point upon which I shall endeavour to extract an answer if I possibly can from the right hon. Gentleman, because I entertain the belief that this Vote is an illegal Vote, which cannot be passed here according to the rule and practice of the House without an Act of Parliament. I will now pass on to Captain Stokes, who is another of these worthies, but one who has not been entrusted with the same authority as Captain Plunkett; he is a mere creature of Captain Plunkett. Now, I have had some experience of Captain Stokes, too. Indeed, there are very few magistrates in the South of Ireland in regard to whom I am not able to tell some story. I shall confine myself, however, to a few words about Captain Stokes, simply because he officiates in the city in which I live. At one of the meetings which I attended, and which was proclaimed, the people assembled to the number of 10,000 or 12,000, and they were exceedingly annoyed at the high-handed conduct of the authorities. They pressed around the Resident Magistrate and the police, and if it had not been for the intervention of the parish priest and other influential gentlemen, there might have been a serious disturbance. I went up to Captain Stokes, and asked him to allow me to go upon the platform for a moment, in order to ask the people to disperse quietly; but he said I should do nothing of the kind, and that if the people did not disperse immediately he would at once order the police to fire into them. We made our apologies, and the result was that we held three mild demonstrations within three miles of the place where the original meeting was to have been held, and we had the speeches reported in the newspapers next morning. So much for the foolishness of endeavouring to put down public sentiment in the methods pursued by the Government. Then I ask would it not be better to allow these meetings to go on, and have the speeches made upon a regular open platform? Surely that would be the best way to meet us and deal with us, having regard to the fact that the Government have no power to deal with public meetings beyond the power of prosecuting before two Resident Magistrates the persons who deliver speeches at them, who would not dare to refuse to convict lest the magistrate might lose his £550 a-year, or, in the case of Captain Plunkett, his allowance of £2,000 a-year. We may be told that Captain Plunkett has no power to dictate the law, and that he takes no opportunity of doing so, so far as sitting on the Magisterial Bench is concerned; but we know how the walls were recently placarded in the County of Clare. We know how unsuccessful the attempt was to stop the meeting at Ennis on Sunday. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Some hon. Gentleman opposite seem to be of opinion that the meeting did not come off, but there are hon. Members in this House who can testify to the contrary. As to the appointment of men like Captain Plunkett, Captain Stokes, and others, I have only to add my testimony to what has been stated by the hon. Member for West Cork (Mr. Gilhooly) with regard to the conduct of these Resident Magistrates. I am acquainted with the general conduct of the magistrates in the county, and I can corroborate fully every statement my hon. Friend has made. I want to know from the Minister who is responsible for the conduct of the Resident Magistrates how he can account for what took place at Galway on Saturday last? A man named O'Donovan and 11 others were summoned before Mr. T. Gibson, a Resident Magistrate, by the District Inspector, under the Crimes Act. These men were kept in custody, and when they were brought before the Court there was only one magistrate on the Bench; therefore the Court was not properly constituted. The accused, at considerable expense, had brought down from Dublin Mr. Bodkin, a barrister, but it was impossible to go into the case. Mr. Bodkin applied that the men should be allowed out on bail; but they were remanded back to prison by Mr. Gibson, the sole magistrate upon the Bench. Now, this is the most convenient way I know of for keeping men in prison without trial at all. It is much worse than the Crimes Act itself, under which you can only sentence men to three or six months' imprisonment after having undergone the farce of an inquiry. But here you have a Resident Magistrate keeping 12 men in prison, at the instance of a District Inspector, with the result that the unfortunate men have been sent back for another fortnight, until the next Petty Sessions are held. It will be very easy when men are remanded under the Crimes Act for the Resident Magistrates not to appear on the Bench, in which case the prisoners will not have at least the semblance of a trial, but will be sent back to gaol for indefinite periods, possibly because one of the Resident Magistrates is out boating, or attending a race meeting, or something of that sort. When the trial does come on, and they are awarded their three months' imprisonment, the time they have already spent in gaol will not be taken into account at all, but they will be tried as if they had not undergone any confinement whatever. I think this is a state of affairs which calls for some explanation from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. I hope that in future he will see when men are summoned under the Crimes Act to appear before the Bench of Magistrates to be prosecuted under that Act, that the Bench itself is legally constituted, so that the trial may take place at once, or that the prisoners shall be permitted to go out on bail until the next day of trial. It cannot be anticipated in such case that the men would run away; if they did, nothing would please the Government better. I can assure the Government, however, that they intend to stand their ground, and that they do not fear any punishment the Resident Magistrates may be pleased to inflict upon them. Now, let me invite the intention of the Committee to a disgraceful scene that occurred at Clare between a Mr. Roche — a relative of Lord De Freyne—who had been subjected to the Plan of Campaign, and has got no rent for eight months, nor is he likely to get any for the next eight months, notwithstanding the Crimes Act, unless he will give fair terms to his tenants — and Mr. Kilkenny, another magistrate. Mr. Roche is Resident Magistrate in County Clare, and on a recent occasion—about three months ago —when some men were brought before the Bench for riot, so gross was the conduct of Mr. Roche that Mr. Kilkenny refused to act with him, and actually retired from the Bench. The proper course would have been for an inquiry to be instituted at once by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. Mr. Kilkenny was so disgusted at the way in which Mr. Roche behaved on the Bench, and the harsh and unjust sentences passed by him on unfortunate people who had been guilty of no offence whatever, that he refused to sit with him on the Bench. In one of the cases the man was simply guilty of the trivial offence of taking forcible possession of the place from which he had been evicted in order to obtain shelter for the night. Of course, Mr. Roche will be retained in the position he now occupies; but I should not be surprised to find that Mr. Kilkenny is removed. I will not detain the Committee further; but I must ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary if he will endeavour to throw light, at any rate, upon the two points I have raised—first, by what authority Captain Plunkett receives a salary of £2,000? And, secondly, when an unfortunate man or woman, as the case may be—for women may be proceeded with under the Crimes Act as well as men—that when these persons are brought before a Bench of Magistrates under the Crimes Act, care will be taken to have two Resident Magistrates upon the Bench authorized to try the case, and if, by accident, one of them is absent, that the unfortunate persons accused shall be admitted to bail?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I shall be able to satisfy the hon. Member both with regard to the salaries of Divisional Magistrates and also with regard to the question of the attendance of magistrates. With regard to the first point, it is perfectly true that the form in which these salaries are presented to the House is not wholly satisfactory, and the Treasury intend to put it on a more satisfactory basis. The duties of these magistrates are more of a police character than of a magisterial. They have not for some years acted as magistrates in a Court of Law, but controlled the police in their district. It will be better, therefore, that these salaries should come under the Police Vote. That alteration requires legislation, for which no opportunity has been afforded this Session. With regard to the question of the presence of two Resident Magistrates where persons are to be tried under the Crimes Act, it is certainly highly inconvenient that there should not be two magistrates present. I am not aware that the case has occurred in the past, and I will do what I can to prevent its occurrence.

Mr. DEASY: I should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman will order these 12 men to be released on bail?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will inquire into the case.

Mr. CAREW (Kildare, N.): I wish to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary of Ireland to the conduct of Major Traill, whose appointment was an outrage on public decency, and whose continuance on the Bench I think is certainly not calculated to inspire confidence on the part of the people of Ireland in the administration of the law in that country, and, in doing so, I wish to draw attention to the antecedents of that gentleman in order that the Government may know what sort of man has been appointed to carry out that important work. Major Traill was an officer of the Army, publicly reprimanded by the Commander-in-Chief, and his removal was requested by his superior officer. This is the man who was appointed Resident Magistrate in one of the most peaceful districts in Ireland. One of his first exploits was to hold a Court on Sunday at the police barracks, where he sentenced three men to various terms of imprisonment with hard labour. The case came before the Appeal Court, and Baron Fitzgerald stated that these men had been illegally sentenced. The only answer his counsel could make was, that Major Traill was but a major in the Army, and as such could not be expected to know the law. I now wish to draw attention to the case of a lad named Killen. On the 5th July last, in the County of Meath, Mr. Tyrrell, J.P., laid an information before Major Traill against this lad. The information was that Killen had attempted to rescue a horse which Tyrrell was driving home, in order that he might charge the owner for trespass. This poor lad was dragged out of his bed early in the morning, and brought before the Court and sentenced to three months' imprisonment, in default of finding sureties, and he would have suffered that sentence if the sureties had not turned up. Major Traill asked if he had anything to say; and on the lad stating that he had witnesses, he turned round and said, "Witnesses be d——d!" and sentenced him to three months' imprisonment. This offence was committed on the 10th June, but it was not until four weeks afterwards that the information was laid, although at the time the offence was committed the Petty Sessions were being held. I put a Question to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) in this House, and his reply was that my facts were not correctly given; that the offence was committed on the 18th June, and that the case was heard at the first Petty Sessions after the offence, and he went on to say that the magistrate stated that the case was treated as one of misbehaviour, and not of crime. I contend that there was not one word of truth in that statement. If the case was one of misbehaviour, and not of crime, why was the lad ordered to be arrested? I say, that a more scandalous case never occurred in Ireland, and unless I get a satisfactory reply that it will be inquired into when the Vote is put from the Chair, I shall divide against it.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.): I should like the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland to give some information with regard to the Resident Magistrate at Ballinasloe. I cannot say what the Resident Magistrates in the district are doing, but I know that it is one of the most peaceful in Ireland. I want to know whether the Government intend to make any reform in the class of men who are selected for Resident Magistrates? The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Gibson) knows very well that there are no two things which it is necessary to keep more distinct from each other than the Commission of the Peace and the Commission in the Army, because it is not to be expected that an officer who has spent his life in the Army will act impartially, or understand the law. The desire of these men is to oppress and tyrannize. It is well known that these gentry throughout Ireland are thoroughly opposed to the people, and several of the ordinary magistrates are opposed to them in religion. As long as this state of things continues we cannot look for justice as between man and man, although the Government must know perfectly well that nothing is more necessary than that the magistrates should, if possible, be absolutely impartial. Then, again, we object to the conversion of policemen into magistrates. The nature of a policeman is to oppress; his business is to run down criminals; and long experience has given these men the desire to get convictions. But you will never find a policeman who has been raised to the Bench adjudicating on a charge against a policeman; in no country in the world can such a thing be found. The best persons to discharge these duties are to be found among the municipal magistrates who are members of the various Town Councils, and have, therefore, a sort of popular consent. There are many of these men in Ireland, and I ask how it is that the Government never think of making them Stipendiary Magistrates? I say that these men, educated as they are, have a better knowledge of the people, and act more impartially and wisely, than officers brought from the Colonies and from India, whose whole lives have been passed, perhaps, in the practice of every form of iniquity. But my suggestion, I know, would not answer the purpose of the landlords; the gentry of the country must be coaxed and sustained in every possible manner; they must have their friends in the Stipendiary Magistrates. Thus we have a class of men whom the people regard as hostile to them; and when we in this House desire to bring about a change, and to have magistrates appointed more in accordance with the feelings of the people, the right hon. Gentleman and others get up and say a few bland words, pass over the occasion as well as they can, and we hear no more about it. Now, I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will make any change in this respect? Will Government put upon the paid Bench men who are independent of the Government and the landlords, and who are uninfluenced by any other consideration than doing justice as between man and man?

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): It is quite impossible for the Government to pretend that the case made out by my hon. Friend the Member for North Kildare (Mr. Carew) is not deserving of an answer. The idea of passing over this very grave scandal without saying a word in explanation or reprobation of it is one which must rather amuse than otherwise, and certainly it will not tend to shorten debate or expedite the Business of the Committee. Here is a man whose antecedents have clearly unfitted him for any post in the service of the country; a man practically dismissed from his regiment by his commanding officer, and set up in Ireland to show some of the qualities he displayed in the Army, and for which he was dismissed; and yet the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland actually takes pride out of the doughty deeds of Major Traill. Here is a man who had the audacity to say in Court—"Witnesses be d——d!" and sent the accused person to gaol without hearing evidence. The right hon. Gentleman pretends now to be discussing other subjects with his Colleagues, and to pass this over; but I can assure him that this is not the way to get the Business of the Committee concluded quickly, and the right hon. Gentleman may rely that if he does not make some promise with regard to the matter he will not get this Vote as soon as he expects. This Major Traill is simply a madman. That is the most charitable description of him, and why a madman is thought necessary to administer law and order in Kildare I cannot imagine. I should have thought it would be better to employ, instead of this madman, a man who has some of the craft of the serpent, and who would not be simply audacious in his disregard of the proprieties in the discharge of his duties.. The treatment of this subject to-night is simply the culmination of the treatment accorded whenever questions on this subject have been asked in this House. Questions have again and again been asked upon the subject, and the answers have invariably been shifty, evasive, and lying.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member knows very well that that word cannot be used here.

An hon. MEMBER: Name!

Mr. CLANCY: I understand there is but one Chairman in this House, and I shall obey him and no one else. What I mean is that the answers given in this House were supplied from persons outside, and it is not out of Order to say that information given by persons outside the House is lying and evasive. We all know that the answers in this case have been supplied by Major Traill himself. The idea of the right hon. Gentleman pretending not to catch this point now, and giving no answer to it! This is a matter which will not be tolerated on these Benches, no matter what your majority may be. The hon. Member for West Cork (Mr. Gilhooly) has referred to a case of importance in his own neighbourhood, and I suppose it is because he is a Gentleman who does not speak often that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has passed over his complaint. In one case my hon. Friend charged some magistrates in his neighbourhood with condoning crime by inflicting a fine of 2*s*. 6*d*. for a moonlight offence committed by a member of the so-called party of law and order; and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland does not seem to think it necessary to give an answer to that. I warn Englishmen that these local grievances are much more important than they seem; these things which occur out of reach of publicity are very important in themselves, because they make your law and order detestable in Ireland, and, in my opinion, justly detestable. In country districts, and in places like Bantry, the only impersonation of Government that the people have is the policeman and the magistrate. These are the two figures which bring the people into contact with the British Government; and in those two figures they are constantly taught to look for determined enemies. It is impossible to expect loyalty under those circumstances, and I hope you will never have it as long as they exist. Loyalty, then, would be, at best, a servile allegiance, dishonouring to those who would render it, and equally dishonouring, in my opinion, to those who accept it. With regard to the magistrates, the great point to my mind is that they all, with, perhaps, a single exception, belong to one small class of the community—they belong to the landlord class; they are mere representatives of the landlord class on the Bench; many of them are landlords themselves, and several of them are rack-renting landlords into the bargain. And then you expect that the vast mass of the tenantry of Ireland, when they meet these men on the Bench, will have respect for the decisions they give! I say that any people who would have respect for the decisions of a class of magistrates of this character would be slaves, and would deserve to be treated as slaves. Then, again, these magistrates are not only selected from the landlord class, but they are nearly all Protestants. In every department of Dublin Castle and of the Government of the country you have Protestants in a large proportion, notwithstanding the fact that four-fifths of the people are Catholics. There is no doubt about this at all. In the Privy Council you have nine Catholics to 36 Protestants. The Lieutenants of Counties number——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Member must confine himself to the Vote before the Committee.

Mr. CLANCY: I was about to go through a list of the Government Departments; but as you will not allow me, Mr. Courtney, I will not do so. I will simply remark that in Ireland, where the overwhelming majority of the population is Catholic, you have 25 Stipendiary Magistrates who are Catholics, and 55 who are Protestants. You have a great many Catholics who are fitted for this position. Why do you not appoint some of them? You will not do that; you confine these appointments, as in every other case, to the small class of Orange landlords, so that you have on the Bench the very worst representative that you can find for the discharge of this office, and then, as I have said, you expect in a country like ours, where the vast majority of the people is Catholic, that they should have respect for your Law Officers, and for your law and order. Your law is another name for injustice, and for organized injustice; your order, under the present state of things, is a perfect sham, and cannot be anything else. I was not in the House while the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was making some remarks about the telegram sent by Captain Plunkett; but I believe he made some statement as to the number of people injured on the occasion of the row at Youghal. He made a similar statement before, which was published in the newspapers, to some electors who were told that this telegram was being largely circulated in certain districts, much to the disadvantage of the Unionist cause; and he said on the 25th July last, in a letter addressed to a Mr. Rowlands, that the circumstance which produced it, and amply justified Captain Plunkett's action, was an attack upon the police in the execution of their duty, in which many of them were badly hurt. The right hon. Gentleman made a similar statement in this House, and on the very day when he made it an investigation was going on, at which the hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin asked the District Inspector of Police to state, on his oath, whether there was any truth in the statement made by the Chief Secretary in the House of Commons on the previous night, when he said that 21 out of 22 policemen were severely injured.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never stated that.

MR. CLANCY: I cannot say what the exact words were which he used; but I was in the House when the right hon. Gentleman said that over 20 persons were injured.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

MR. CLANCY: The hon. Member for the Harbour Division of Dublin then asked whether there was any truth in the statement that that number were severely injured? And the Sub-Inspector's reply was—"There is no truth in the statement that they were injured. They were not injured." If the right hon. Gentleman's point is that he did not say that they were severely injured, but that they were injured, then I present him with the Inspector's reply, which was that there was no foundation for the statement. Another witness said that only one man was injured, and that he was not in danger.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The facts are these. Out of 22 men, 21 were struck with stones and pebbles, and three men were severely wounded.

MR. CLANCY: To that statement the Inspector gives a flat contradiction.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I made the statement on the authority of the Inspector himself.

MR. CLANCY: I leave the matter to be settled between the Inspector and the right hon. Gentleman; but I would, in addition, point out that the latter statement is on oath, and that the information conveyed to this House is not on oath. I can only assume, therefore, that the latter statement is the more correct of the two; and if the right hon. Gentleman does not think it necessary to cast discredit on the Inspector of Police he might get up now and withdraw a statement calculated to cast serious obloquy on the people of the district. A very innocent interpretation is sought to be put on the now famous instructions of Captain Plunkett to the police not to hesitate to shoot We are told that this was to warn the people; but we know that the Irish Government were never so mad in their lives as when they found that this telegram was published, and they were so angry that an investigation, extending over three weeks, at which many officials were examined, was held in order to find out and punish, if possible, the individual who communicated the telegram. I do not think that the right hon. Gentleman has come very well out of this business; but, if he thinks differently, perhaps the time will come when he will revise his opinions on that point also.

MR. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I wish to draw attention to the case of Mr. Boylan, against whom Major Traill obtained a warrant. He went to Sir B. Chapman, his chum, and made a statement, upon which a warrant was issued for trespass. Now, anyone will know that trespass is not an indictable offence; but, nevertheless, Mr. Boylan was brought up and put into gaol, where he remained several hours. In order to give the Committee an idea of the opinion which prevailed as to the legality of the warrant, I will just read some of Major Traill's cross-examination—

"Question.—Did you ask Sir B. Chapman to issue a warrant?

"Answer.—I do not believe I did.

"Sir B. Chapman.—I think you did.

"Question.—On your oath, did you ask for a warrant?

"Answer.—I think not. I pointed out that there were two courses open to him by Act of Parliament; one was to issue a warrant for the man's arrest.

"Question.—Did you believe it was a case for a warrant?

"Answer.—Yes.

"Question.—On what grounds?

"Answer.—It was a trespass likely to lead to a breach of the peace."

Now, Sir, I ask this question—Is a magistrate having such a small knowledge of the Criminal Law a proper person to administer the Crimes Act in Ireland? I believe Major Traill was simply endeavouring to overdo his rights as a magistrate. He had no right or title to ask for a warrant. Major Traill has gone in for keeping fowls and selling eggs; he has also taken to summoning people for trespass, and about a fortnight ago the whole time of the Court was taken up between Major Traill and neighbours who were disputing a question of trespass. Under these circumstances, it is absurd to expect that this man can administer the Crimes Act properly. He is a man of irritable temper, and his action is such as in Ireland is calculated to provoke riot. A short time ago an execution was being made by the Sheriff, and Major Traill was sent in command of the police. A most inoffensive crowd assembled merely to witness the process of the law being carried out. There was some groaning by a small boy, and Major Traill rode through the crowd and said—"Who dares cough here?" I ask whether these sayings are consistent with the character of a gentleman and a magistrate? I think it is most monstrous to allow a man of such erratic mind, and with such a disposition to quarrel with his neighbours, to have any authority in these matters; and I ask whether he will be allowed to administer the Crimes Act, and also whether the Government consider that his action in Kildare and Meath was in keeping with the position he holds?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY for IRELAND (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): The hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) has made an attack upon the Resident Magistrates generally; but I must remind him, even supposing there was nothing to be said in favour of the Resident Magistrates, which I am very far from saying, believing that they have done their duty loyally and efficiently, that the greater part of them were appointed by the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench when he was in Office. The hon. Gentleman spoke of the question of religion having entered into the consideration of the Government when they were appointed; but I am bound to say that neither the present Government nor any other in this country has ever entertained the question of religion in considering the appointment of magistrates when they believed that by them the law would be fairly and impartially administered. One of the magistrates who has been most bitterly attacked is Captain Plunkett, and he happens to be a Roman Catholic. From my own knowledge of Ireland, and speaking of the magistrates as a whole, I believe that both those who are Protestants and those who are Catholics do their duty, and that they are entitled to the respect of the country. A good deal of the time of the Committee has been taken up by the hon. Member for North Kildare (Mr. Carew) and other hon. Gentlemen in discussing the position of Major Traill, and matters connected with his jurisdiction. The hon. Gentleman who brought forward the case and the hon. Member for North Dublin have gone very far into Major Traill's antecedents, and the latter hon. Gentleman has informed us that he was dismissed from his regiment by his commanding officer.

Mr. CLANCY: I believe that I was not technically accurate; I merely intended to put in popular language what was stated by my hon. Friend.

Mr. CAREW: He was publicly reprimanded by the Commander-in-Chief, and his removal from the regiment was recommended by his commanding officer.

Colonel KING-HARMAN: That may be correct; but I have not heard of it before. Major Traill, however, has done his duty to the satisfaction of successive Governments. The point brought before the Committee by the hon. Member for North Kildare (Mr. Carew) has been the subject of Questions put and answered two or three times in this House. I, of course, make no complaint whatever, except so far as this—that I answered those Questions on the best information I could procure, and to the best of my ability, and the hon. Gentleman certainly did not give me any reason to believe at the time that he was dissatisfied with my answers. I believe, from the information I received, that my answer was in the main correct; and I have no doubt the statement of the hon. Gentleman is also correct according to his information. But if the hon. Member has any knowledge that the man is going to bring an action against Major Traill there is ground for complaint, because he might entrap the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland or myself into statements which might be used to prejudice the case. The hon. Member has made a statement which I know is specifically denied. He said that Major Traill used the words—"Witnesses be d——d." My information is that he used no such words; and I am informed that the man brought up no witnesses whatever. Now, I maintain that in this case Major Traill really acted with propriety. If Major Traill had sent the young man to the Assizes, he would have been put to great expense in engaging counsel and attending at the Assizes, which were held about 30 miles off; but, instead of that, Major Traill—there being no practical defence—took the facts into consideration, and bound him over to good behaviour on two sureties. With regard to the trial of Boylan, I can only say that this is another instance where Her Majesty's Government are called on to express an opinion in a case which is very likely to result in an action; and I, therefore, decline to express any opinion in the matter. I refer the hon. Gentleman to the words used by the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland—namely—

> "If this warrant were illegal, it would be a case for civil proceedings against the magistrate who issued the warrant. And I decline to express a further opinion on the subject."

I think if the right hon. and learned Attorney General cannot express an opinion on the case, that I may reasonably refrain from doing so. At the same time, I believe that if a case of injustice is brought against any magistrate, hon. Gentlemen know very well that the matter will be investigated.

MR. CLANCY: We have just listened to a speech of the precise sort which we expected from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. We never expected to hear a repudiation of the action of landlord magistrates from one connected with them by every tie. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman belongs to that class; and I am perfectly sure we shall never hear from him a reprobation of any act of that class, whatever be the outrage on justice which may be perpetrated by them.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member has made a most unwarranted accusation in saying that whatever outrage on justice is perpetrated it will not be reprobated by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman.

MR. CLANCY: If I am obliged to withdraw, of course I do so. I proceed to remark upon other portions of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman's speech. He says that the present Government are not responsible for the appointment of the magistrates. That is what we hear from one Government after another; no matter what Government is in power, it is always the answer we get. Dublin Castle remains the same iniquitous despotism, no matter what Party occupies the Ministerial Bench in this House. That is one of the things which distinguishes the Government of England in Ireland. The wishes and opinions of the majority of the people of England are deferred to; but in Ireland, no matter what Government is in power, you have the same detestable Government in Dublin Castle. On another point, also, we have heard from the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the same reply that we are always accustomed to hear—namely, that the question of religion is never taken into account in the appointment of the magistrates. But you will find in every Department of Dublin Castle, and in every Department of Government in Ireland, a small minority of Catholic officials and a great majority of Protestants, although, as I have shown, four-fifths of the population of the country are of the Catholic religion, and it is simply ridiculous to pretend that all this comes by accident. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman, in the course of his remarks, presumed to speak for a section of the Irish people. I deny that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is competent to speak on behalf of any part of the people of Ireland. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman was kicked out of Dublin County, and he could not get a seat anywhere else in Ireland. I believe he tried his luck in the North of Ireland, and was as unsuccessful as he had been South of the Boyne; and, therefore, I say it is not for him to speak on behalf of any portion of the people of Ireland. The principle of your Constitution is most beautiful in theory; you can read about it in books, and can hear about it in this House; but when you examine it in practice, you find it to be a sham and a delusion. It is the same with regard to the alleged right of action against magistrates when they do wrong. Whenever an action is brought against a magistrate in Ireland, the whole power of the Treasury is applied to defend that man, no matter what evidence there may be against him; and yet you tell us that poor men who cannot afford to spend 2*s.* 6*d.* at Petty Sessions have a right of action against the magistrates. To tell these people that they have a right of action against magistrates is to tell them what is technically true but substantially false, and to make such a statement in this House is simply to add insult to injury.

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.): I wish to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland to the nature of some important statements which are made in this House on the authority of Resident Magistrates and others. Irish Members know well that the Government must depend on secondary information, and that upon information of that kind they must give us answers. The information supplied by the magistrates in Ireland is very often lying information, because it is given in their own defence, and we cannot, therefore, rely upon it. Whenever I put a Question to the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman) I find that, with regard to the cases brought forward, the Resident Magistrates supply information altogether wide of the mark. It was only last Saturday that a number of Orangemen entered a place within my district and challenged the people to come out and fight them; the Resident Magistrate of Armagh, Mr. Thomas Hamilton, gave no instructions to the police to summon these people. He is an Orangeman; and I know, of my own knowledge, that Orangemen in Armagh where I reside are allowed to assemble, and are reviewed by the Resident Magistrate. That is the sort of thing which does not create any regard or respect for the law. This magistrate receive £800 a-year, whereas the County Court Judge of Armagh has only £900 a-year, and his duties are very onerous, and, so far as legal requirements are concerned, he is a very excellent man. Now, I complain that the Resident Magistrate reviews these Orangemen. I have seen them and heard them parading through the town under the leadership of Mr. Hamilton, and parading and drum-beating even when the Judges were sitting on the Bench administering justice. The Resident Magistrate, Mr. Hamilton, permits these men to go drumming through Armagh to such an extent that the Judge of Assize finds it necessary to adjourn the Court. The hon. and gallant Member for North Armagh (Colonel Saunderson) led the drumming party, passed the place where the Judge was sitting in 1886, and Mr. Hamilton permitted the thing to take place, and allowed it to interfere with the holding of the Assizes for the day. That such things should be allowed is most extraordinary. Imagine such a thing being allowed in Cork, or in any other city in Ireland! We have heard great complaints in this country about the interference with the administration of justice in Ireland; but the occurrence I am describing took place in my own county, in the town in which I reside, and there never was a word of objection raised. If complaint had been made to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary by me, I should have been told that nothing of the kind had occurred, because the right hon. Gentleman himself would not have known the facts, but would have had to depend for his information upon the Local Authorities. When Questions are put to the right hon. Gentleman in this House he bases his replies on information of this kind. I say that he relies altogether on false information. I tell the right hon. Gentleman that, in my opinion, the Orange organization in the town of Armagh has put down the Queen's authority. Its operations have manifestly displeased the people, and yet the magistrates leave them without any redress, notwithstanding that events have transpired there which, if they had occurred elsewhere, would have been dealt with by the police on their own authority, without even waiting for the advice of the magistrates. I do not wish to ask that those who differ from me in politics may be punished—far from it—but there is no doubt that the present state of things in County Armagh is so uncomfortable and irritating that it cannot continue. Something must be done to give the people confidence in the administration of the law; and unless pressure is put upon Mr. Hamilton he is not likely to administer justice fairly. I happened to put a Question once in this House with reference to the conduct of Mr. Hamilton on the occasion of the demolition of my house by an Orange mob. It was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Mr. John Morley) who was then Chief Secretary. That right hon. Gentleman rose at that Table and made a statement contrary to the fact; but he depended, of course, for his information upon Mr. Hamilton, and of course the information he received was contrary to the fact. He took occasion, when trying some of the rioters at the Petty Sessions, to make use of the expression that he did not care about Parliament. If I made such a statement in this House, either the Speaker or the Chairman of Committees would call me to Order; and this man, who is in the pay of Parliament, wishes, apparently, to have his salary without having his conduct commented upon—at any rate, he has defied Parliament in open Court. It is of no use asking him about it, because he would altogether deny having used the words attributed to him; but there is no doubt as to the fact, because his observations were reported fully in the public Press. When we put Questions in this House relating to his conduct, the answer he makes, when he comes to hear the circumstances, is that he does not care about Parliament. I think such conduct should not be tolerated in this Resident Magistrate. If any Member gave utterance to a contempt of Parliament in this House it would not be tolerated; and I certainly think that where you have an ex-policeman administering the law, though possessing very little knowledge of that law, he should be subject to some supervision with reference to his conduct towards this House, and with reference to his language towards this House. He should be subject, I think, to the same supervision and the same control as a Member of the High Court of Parliament. I do not know whether my hon. Friends around me would agree with me if I moved the reduction of this Vote. I will not adopt that course; but, at any rate, I thought it my duty to bring the conduct of these men under the notice of the House.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): The hon. Member who has just sat down appealed to me as to whether he should move the reduction of the Vote, and I urged him not to; and my reason for so doing was simply this—that there are about 80 of these Resident Magistrates, and if a reduction is moved in one case, there is no reason why it should not be moved in other cases—it would simply be useless to oppose the Vote in the case of any single magistrate. We do not wish hon. Members to narrow the Vote in any particular direction, and if we oppose it it is because we have a serious objection to all these Resident Magistrates. There may possibly be a few righteous men amongst the magistrates; but I believe it is about the proportion which of old you might have expected to find in Sodom and Gomorrah. We have heard a great deal to-night about Major Traill. We have heard a great deal about the performances of this military gentleman, who goes in for what we might call—to use an Irish phrase — "Bouilomskiagh," and for administering justice according to his own ideas. But this Major Traill is only one of a class of military magistrates; but he is typical of the rest—I might say "the trail of the serpent is over them all." What I complain of more than anything else is that they are backed up in their performances in this House. I do not like to say anything in the absence of the Irish Minister responsible in some degree for these persons—the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman)—which might appear as though I was taking advantage of his absence; but I think I have a perfect right to say that he does not like to go back on his class. The right hon. and gallant Gentleman might have been one of these Resident Magistrates himself—probably he would have accepted the post some time ago if it had been offered to him. Of course, I may be wrong, and the right hon. and gallant Gentleman might have fancied himself a bit above it. He has endeavoured to defend the Resident Magistrates here to-night, and has said a lot for them, which, after all, though it may have sounded plausible enough, to our minds amounted to very little. He denied that Major Traill was dismissed from the Army, and he endeavoured to make much of that point. Now, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman in saying that played upon words. I do not accuse him of desiring to lead the Committee astray, or of desiring to impose upon them with a falsehood; but, as was shown by the interruptions he evoked whilst he was speaking, it was recognized that he merely played upon words. Major Traill may not have been actually drummed out of the regiment, and may not have had tin kettles thrown after him; but he was dismissed without pay and pension—he was "requested" to leave. If he had not left when he did there can be very little doubt that he would have been put out in a more disgraceful way, and we all know what that means. Anyone who has had anything to do with public boards or offices knows exactly what it means when a man is "requested to resign." It means that if he does not resign he will be dismissed; but getting rid of him in this way leaves him an opportunity of getting another situation, which he might, to a great extent, be deprived of if he were absolutely dismissed. This has been the course adopted in the case of Major Traill, and I think that the Vote which is down here for his salary shows that such is the case. It shows, as compared with other Votes, that whereas an average military gentleman coming out of the Army with some distinction and receiving a pension is compensated for his services when entering the ranks of the Resident Magistrates in Ireland by a salary of £300 a-year, Major Traill, because he was dismissed from the Army with a certain amount of disgrace and without a pension, is compensated by the Government by being started at a salary of £425 per annum. It seems from this that disgracing an honourable profession represents £125 a-year in the eyes of the British Government in its administration of Irish affairs. At any rate, that is their position with regard to the case of Major Traill. Then we heard a great deal from my hon. Friend the Member for North Kildare (Mr. Carew), who very rarely troubles us in these matters, and I think that the fact of his having made his first two formal speeches on this subject shows that he feels very keenly on it. We have heard the arguments of my hon. Friend used in the case of the lad Killen, and we have heard the answer of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Isle of Thanet—or, at any rate, what the right hon. and gallant Gentleman considered an answer. This lad, it seems, had endeavoured to rescue a horse which one Mr. Tyrrell, J.P., was engaged in driving home in order to charge the owner with trespass. The boy was lugged out of his bed at 5 o'clock in the morning and taken 30 miles off to a Court, where he was tried by Mr. Traill, the Resident Magistrate. Well, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman says that if Major Traill has acted illegally in this case there is a remedy against him. But, granting that there is a remedy, it must be remembered that this is a poor boy, and that the resources of the law are not within easy reach of such a person. It will be admitted by everyone practically acquainted with the working of the Government in Ireland that all the resources of the law and all the funds of the Government are at the disposal of the Resident Magistrate, especially when he breaks the law. Then the right hon. and gallant Gentleman made another point. He said—"Oh; but the boy was ready with his sureties in Court, and that showed he was ready to meet the case." A person taken out of his bed at 5 o'clock in the morning and conveyed to a Court 30 miles away is said to be ready to meet a charge brought against him under those circumstances; but how is the fact that the boy had sureties in Court accounted for? They are accounted for in this way. The boy's father naturally could not sleep when his son had been taken away, and he therefore got up and made the best of his way to the Court, getting a neighbour to accompany him. They followed in the track of the post car which was carrying away the lad, and the consequence was that when they got to the Court they were ready to be sureties for him. I say they were ready to be sureties, but they were not called upon; for, as a matter of fact, the boy was sentenced to three months' imprisonment before the father or his friend arrived at all. Even if that had not been so—even if the boy had not had a father, or if the father had been decrepit—thank

God such is the state of public feeling in Ireland at this moment that there is no place, however obscure, where a young man like this could be tried, and where it is evident to the people around that the accused is deserving of sympathy and is being persecuted, where you could not get persons to come forward and pledge everything they possessed in the world to go surety for him. That, Sir, is the state of things in Ireland. It is not sympathy with crime; but the fact is firmly imprinted on the minds of the people of the country that ninety-nine out of a hundred prisoners proceeded against in cases of this kind are not guilty of crime at all. The very arguments that the right hon. and gallant Gentleman used in this case can be turned against himself. "Oh," said he, "Major Traill would have been guilty of cruelty if he had postponed this case. He would have been acting unjustly if he had remanded the prisoner, because the case would have been put off to the Petty Sessions;" and he says that at the very same time that he makes a point out of the fact that the father and the friend of this young man were present in Court to go bail for him. Everyone who knows Ireland, and who knows what the administration of the law is there, need do nothing more than take the first part of an answer made by anyone representing the Irish Government, and wait for the second part of the answer before the conclusion of the speech, in order to find one part contradict the other. All you have to do is to put one against the other, and you will find that the first will refute the last, and the last will refute the first. If these men were in Court ready to go bail for this young man, surely Major Traill could have remanded the case, and would have found these persons substantial and sufficient surety. If they were substantial and sufficient bail for three months, they would have been substantial and sufficient bail for the appearance of the accused at the expiration of a remand to allow him to prepare his defence. Magistrates in Ireland have no right to dispense what has been significantly called "palm-tree justice." It is their duty to do real justice. This case has been raised before. The proper thing for the magistrate to have done would have been to say—"This young man does not seem to have his evidence ready, and I will therefore remand the case to the ordinary Petty Sessions. If I am there I should try it, and if not it will be taken up by the other magistrates; but in any case I remand this young man on substantial bail being forthcoming. I consent to release him from this day to the Sessions day." The right hon. and gallant Gentleman cannot say that there would have been anything unconstitutional or improper in the adoption of such a course as that. The young man might have been released during the interval between the first hearing of the case and the Petty Sessions, in order to attend to his work and to do his ordinary business, and then in the course of time, when he had his case ready, he would have come forward to stand his trial, and take the consequences of his action if he were guilty. But what are the facts? Why, the facts are these—that there is this Justice of the Peace, named Tyrrell, who goes down into County Kildare and into County Meath occasionally. This is one of the peculiarities of the system of government in Ireland—and it really is very wearisome to be obliged to inflict these descriptions on this House time after time; but until the House tries to realize the kind of men they keep in Ireland in the form of governors we shall find no improvement in these matters, and cannot avoid speaking of them. You have a class of broken-down adventurers who have become magistrates, and are local Justices, outside the class of Resident Magistrates altogether. Belonging to this class was this Mr. Tyrrell. He was a Justice of the Peace, having got the position because he asked for it, I suppose, or perhaps because the Government thought him just the sort of person to exercise the functions. He had no property qualification. I have known a case in Kerry where the father has ceased to have the property qualification, and his three sons have obtained it in rotation. But I pass from the question of Justices of the Peace. This man Tyrrell was engaged in driving a horse from a farm from which a tenant had been evicted when the lad Killen tried to rescue the horse. Mr. Tyrrell prosecuted the boy, and the Resident Magistrate, just because Mr. Tyrrell brought the summons, conceiving it to be a case in which there was some agrarian or political aspect, said to this adventurous Justice of the Peace, who has degenerated through all the grades which are known in Ireland from Justice of the Peace down to bum-bailiff, "What costs do you require?" Now, I do not pretend to be anything of a lawyer, and I have had the audacity to publicly thank God that I am not; but I, at least, know this with regard to the Petty Sessional practice in Ireland—that no costs are ever given in such cases, and I believe that the law does not allow the magistrates in cases of trespass to give any costs at all. The damages which are inflicted under the Petty Sessions Acts are damages which are intended to cover costs. Damages are given in the case of trespass by means of a fine, and there is no provision for costs at all. But Major Traill not only strained the law, but invented a law of his own. He says—I presume in the words of that other gentleman of whom we heard some time ago—"What do I care for Parliament," or "Parliament may go to ——"—well a place that was designated. Major Traill said—"Will you take 10*s.* 6*d.* in one case, and will you take £1 in the other?" I have seen magistrates who seemed to affect to know a great deal about the law—I have seen them going over and over again to study the books to see whether in certain cases they could not give 5*s.* costs to the solicitors at Petty Sessions. I see the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland opposite to me, and I see also another hon. and learned Gentleman sitting there, one high in the pay of the Government. I ask those Gentlemen to tell me under what Statute it is legal to give these costs, and even if they fall back on that beautiful Elysium of Common Law, I ask them where in Common Law is power given to a magistrate to grant costs because he grants a summons? Now, I will tell hon. Members who are doing me the honour of listening to me that the real and only ground upon which these magistrates go is this. They say to themselves—"This man has acted as an Emergency man; he has shown a certain firmness; there is a bit of dash about him; and he sets himself in opposition to the Nationalists to whom the Government are opposed—I will give him 10*s.* 6*d.* in one case, and I will give him £1 in the other case." I need not say that it is absolutely illegal for a magistrate to take such a position. I say that without fear of contradiction—of course, if I am overstating the case, there are hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side capable of correcting me; and I think it would be a useful thing if they did correct me if I am overstating the case. When we were discussing the salary of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland we were careful enough to raise this point, and to request that he should give directions in these matters, and should see that these magistrates kept within the law. Would it be too much to ask him that he should apply his mind to the facts of the case I am now referring to, in order to see if this man Traill has gone outside the law and had any warrant for giving Tyrrell £1 costs in one case and 10*s.* 6*d.* in another? I would narrow my question to these two figures. Of course this 30*s.* is a small consideration; but there is a great principle at stake. This is not a matter in which I need confine my observations to what I may call reflected experiences of my hon. Friends representing other counties; but I speak of what comes under my own observation in the county of Kerry. I know cases in which persons are Boycotted in the sense that no one will take their farms, and the landlord levels down the fences and throws the land open to the cattle and pigs and horses of the neighbouring farmers, and then he occasionally rides out, finds the animals trespassing, and proceeds against their owners for damages as did this man Tyrrell. In cases of this kind damages are given such as were allowed by Major Traill. I would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland to inquire into this matter, and to see what warrant Major Traill had for the action he took in the case to which I have referred. Under what Statute is this power to be found? The right hon. and learned Gentleman appears to be studying *Dod* at this moment. He will not find the information I am asking for in that book. If it is to be found in the Common Law, I would ask him in what Reign, because even Common Law begins somewhere or other, I presume. When was the practice first established of allowing heavy costs in the case of the trespass of a goat? I take it that the trespass of a goat will last from half-an-hour to four hours, and at the very outside 6*d*. will represent all the damages which the animal could have inflicted in that time in the matter of the consumption of vegetables. Why should you give a man in such a case £1 as costs for his trouble in turning the goat out of a field? And yet magistrates have done that. I do not think even Common Law is elastic enough to cover cases like this. Is it elastic enough to say that where fences have been levelled down, and that where there is a common adjoining the public road leading to the fields, the fences round which have been levelled, that the owners of cattle sent to graze on such common shall be guilty of trespass if their animals wander on to the land from which the fences have been removed? The law requires that you shall take reasonable care to prevent trespass upon your land—that is to say, that you shall have it properly protected, so that trespass shall not be easy, before you can recover damages from your neighbour. But it is found in practice in Ireland that the magistrates make some such excuse as that the fences are torn down by vindictive persons. They say this in cases where the fences have crumbled through old age, and where they have been levelled by the landlords themselves. Yet the Resident Magistrates are evincing their vindictiveness against those amongst whom they live, inflict not only punishment for trespass, but also allow heavy costs to those who bring the actions. Probably the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite will think I have said enough on this subject. Well, Sir, I should like to pass from it to another matter which more closely affects myself. There is, of course, no Motion before the Committee. I should not countenance one, and I do not intend to move one myself, because I believe that a Motion for reduction might as reasonably be made in the case of one Resident Magistrate as another, and if we started moving reductions we should have to move a matter of 70 or 80 of them. While refraining from such a Motion, however, I desire to bring before the Committee a matter which I have already raised in this House on previous occasions. I believe that when I have previously brought the matter to which I am about to allude before the notice of the Government, the attendance of hon. Members has been just as thin as it is at present. I am going to make a charge against the Irish Executive, and I make it in the presence of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland. I have made this charge twice before, and after I have solemnly and seriously brought it forward for the third time in this House, if he does not think it right to formally refute it, I shall be obliged to assume that it is true. [Mr. GIBSON dissented.] The right hon. and learned Gentleman shakes his head; but how many times, I would ask, is a Member to affirm the truth of a certain circumstance without receiving a refutation before he is entitled to believe that the circumstance he has alleged to be true is so? After all, I am a Member of Parliament just as much as the right hon. and learned Gentleman is. Nay, more than that, Sir, I represent a locality in which I am known, having lived there much of my life, which is more than the right hon. and learned Gentleman can say. I am elected for a district which the right hon. and learned Gentleman would try in vain to get returned for. I have not to go out of Ireland to get elected to this House. Well, I have a right, not only to the attention of this House, but to some credence; and the charge I make, if it is not answered—if it is not disproved—I shall continue to make from time to time, and shall continue to assert the truth of. It is this. I have asserted in this House that there is a practice which has existed under former Governments, and which at present exists under this Government, and which, I believe, will continue to exist—that is to say, in cases where two Resident Magistrates are called upon to adjudicate upon cases brought before them of sending to those magistrates what is known in Dublin Castle as a "file of instructions," containing the history which Dublin Castle has secured of the men under trial, and all the circumstances relating to them. What I fully believe these files contain are implied directions as to what is to be the sentence to be imposed on the men to be tried. That, Sir, is the charge I have brought against the Irish Executive before. I make that charge again to-night more emphatically than ever before.

Let the right hon. and learned Gentleman shirk it again if he wishes. I do not charge it particularly to the present Government; but I charge it to the system of Government at Dublin Castle, because, in these matters, there is no choice with regard to particular Governments. All that a Tory Government can pretend to do is to say that they have got so far in the administration of the law in Ireland as a Liberal Government got some years ago. But that is not enough for us. They have only got so far to go to get up to their necks in filth. The late Government have waded through it, and they are now sensible enough to be anxious to cleanse themselves entirely. I say that a mere wave of the hand from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, denying that such a thing is the case, is not enough for me. I am speaking not only from my own information, but from information supplied to me. I am speaking particularly from information I have received from a respected member of the Irish Bar, a gentleman very well known to persons practising at the Irish Bar—one well known, I have no doubt, to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland himself——

MR. GIBSON: What is his name?

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I was about to say, but whose name I will not disclose. Right hon. Gentlemen opposite are very ready to stand up in this House and to say—"I make this statement on my honour—I make it as a Member of the Irish Government—for obvious reasons I cannot give the name of my informant." Very well, Sir, the Government will not disclose the names of men who receive hundreds of pounds for supplying them with false information; and yet when gentlemen are good enough to allow their instincts of humanity to lead them to give information of a truthful kind reflecting upon the character of the Government, they say, "Give us their names."

An hon. MEMBER: They will not give us the names of the persons Boycotted.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Of course they will not. These names ought to be as easily obtainable as the directions upon finger-posts and mile-stones if the statements made by the Government as to Boycotting are true. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland says, with a simplicity which I should hardly have given him credit for, "What is his name?" and he asks that even before I had finished that part of my sentence in which I was going to protect myself by saying—"whose name I will not give." Do not mind the name—suppose I heard it from a parrot or a starling. I make the charge on my responsibility as a Member of Parliament. I pledge my faith—I pledge my soul—that I believe the truth of what I say. Do you think it worth your while to answer it? I pledge myself solemnly that I believe the truth of it; and, moreover, I pledge myself to this—that nothing the right hon. and learned Gentleman shall say in mere evasion, or in mere deprecation of raising questions of this kind, will blot it out from my mind until he gives the legal proofs that such a thing is impossible. [*Laughter.*] One of my hon. Friends says that the right hon. and learned Gentleman is laughing at me. Well, I think his laugh will not be taken as against myself, but as against these men against whom this serious charge is brought, if they do not attempt to show that it is unfounded. After all, this Parliament is not going to scatter quite as suddenly as might have been expected, and perhaps I may be able to give the name of my informant in order to satisfy the right hon. and learned Gentleman. The right hon. and learned Gentleman thinks it my duty to give this name. I do not; but this I will promise, that I will write to my friend in order to ask him if I have his authority to mention his name in the House. I know that my friend is a man who has the means of knowing the circumstances of which he speaks, and I certainly think it would be just that we should be punished if we are deceiving the House in this matter. My firm conviction is that my friend is not deceiving me. I state here what I have already said on a previous occasion, that I myself have seen, in cases where there have been trials before two magistrates, notably in the case tried before Messrs. Warburton and Stokes—I have seen parcels brought from Dublin by the mail train and handed on the railway platform to the District Inspector, who, in turn, has handed them to the Resident Magistrates. That is what I have seen; and, besides that, the information I have received in this matter is given me by a friend of mine who may be said to be in the green room of Dublin Castle. Letters which I have seen handed in the way I have pointed out have been described to me as containing instructions to the Resident Magistrates, giving the political and criminal history of the men to be tried, and the decision which it was expected the magistrates would arrive at. That is the system of administration in Ireland. Supposing the allegation is not true, then all I can say is that it is six months ago since I first brought the charge in this House. I asserted it subsequently, and it has now been believed for many months in Ireland.

An hon. MEMBER: For years.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: That, I say, is the system of administration in Ireland. If there be no truth in this charge, and if you really have the interests of good government in Ireland at heart, why will you allow belief in its truth to exist in the minds of the Irish people? I suppose you do not care for the opinion of the Irish people; but, after all, it seems to me that anybody desiring to govern a country properly must be anxious to have the confidence of the people of that country. Surely those who have the administration of the law should be above suspicion. I will just mention a single instance which will, perhaps, show how we have reason to distrust the law in Ireland. I mentioned this case also in this House, and it was another matter which was not replied to by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, although the right hon. and learned Gentleman and his right hon. Colleague the Chief Secretary for Ireland never loses an opportunity of disproving charges, however small they may be, when they feel themselves in a position to disprove them. I instance the case of two Resident Magistrates in the county of Kerry, the case of Messrs Considine and Butler, who sat at the Killarney Petty Sessions a few days after the Glenbeigh evictions. There were 23 cases of obstruction to the officers of the law tried there. It was proved by the solicitor for the prisoners that the whole proceedings at the evictions at Glenbeigh were illegal. It was proved that the young man who went out there as bailiff to the Sheriff to take possession had no legal title to do so. He was merely a friend of the Sheriff, and was sent by the Sheriff to do the work. He had no regular commission approved of by Act of Parliament. As a matter of fact, in the cases of the 10 or 11 houses which were demolished by crowbar, and burnt by petroleum, not one single tenant was lawfully evicted, and for every one of these cases the police, the Resident Magistrates, the agents, and this young man who represented the Sheriff could be brought to book for incendiarism. It may be said—"Then why do you not bring them to book?" Well, Sir, this is one of the cases where the people have the law on their side, but in which they are utterly unable to enforce it. The people are too poor—they are starving and famishing by the roadside. Their houses have been demolished over their heads, burned to the ground, and they have no remedy. Well, as I say, these two Resident Magistrates sat in the town of Killarney with two other Justices of the Peace, because it was the ordinary Petty Sessions, and in the case of these prisoners brought before them for assault the judgment given was to the effect that though it was proved that there was assault committed, the police and the representative of the Sheriff, and the magistrates and all those who had taken part in the proceedings, were trespassers, and accordingly the case was dismissed. Well, the magistrates in this case were technically right and morally right; but what was the result? Why, Mr. Considine differed from the judgment of the majority of the magistrates, whereas Mr. Butler agreed with the local Justices in their view of the matter; and for this, presumably, Mr. Butler was transferred to a far-away district at great personal inconvenience and expense to himself, while Mr. Considine was sent up to the neighbourhood of Dublin, very near his own property, to a place where there was plenty of society and all manner of comforts to his personal taste. It is impossible to refrain from the view that in the one case the magistrate was punished, and that in the other he was rewarded for the action taken at the trial of the prisoners for assault in Killorglin. I do not say that it is actually so, but such is the idea in the minds of the people, and I say I have made this charge before, but without receiving any answer. I again challenge the right hon. and learned Gentleman upon this point, and upon the point to which I have just referred. I think it has come to a point now when he should either admit or deny the justice of my accusation. The matter is serious enough to be taken notice of; but no mere perfunctory denial, no statement to the effect that such and such a thing is impossible, will be satisfactory to me or to the Committee. Perhaps the right hon. and learned Gentleman will not reserve his answer for a moment.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): I wish to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland a question with regard to the conduct of a Resident Magistrate at Millstreet. It appears that a summons was issued and signed by the magistrates in Mullingar for an offence committed at Millstreet. Why was not Mr. Beckett asked to sign the summons, and at whose instance was the prosecution in the first place instituted? Did Mr. Beckett institute it, or did Colonel Boulby move at the instance of Mr. Beckett? Then, as to the double charge, I trust the right hon. and learned Gentleman will give me some information with regard to that. He left the point in an incomplete state the last time it was raised; but I think he will be able to give some information to-night. I desire to know whether Mr. Beckett initiated the proceedings in the first instance, and whether Colonel Boulby only acted under his advice? Mr. Beckett was in charge of the police.

Mr. GIBSON: I regret to say that I cannot give the hon. Member any information as to the confidential communications made to the authorities on which the prosecution has been instituted against Mr. Hayden and the 26 other gentlemen for illegal conduct on the 17th of August. Mr. Beckett was the Resident Magistrate in charge that day, no doubt, and the hon. Gentleman will see that by reason of the circumstance of his being actually in charge he would not be a proper person to take any part in the hearing of the case. Here is another matter which will probably recommend itself to the hon. Gentleman—perhaps it is known to him already, however—that Mr. Beckett went away a short time ago to some German baths, in Hamburg or some other place, from which he has been summoned as a witness—as I am informed—by Mr. Hayden. As to other matters bearing upon this case which have been alluded to, I will not enter into them, as I understand they are to be dealt with later on on the Report stage, hon. Members not being satisfied with what they have learned from the Government. In regard to the observations of the hon. Member for West Kerry (Mr. E. Harrington), I have often been struck in this House with the extraordinary amount of information of an imaginative character enjoyed by hon. Members opposite as to what takes place in Government Offices. The hon. Member says that his information has been supplied by a gentleman that I am acquainted with, and who is in the employment of the Government.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I did not say anything about his being employed by the Government; and will the right hon. and learned Gentleman allow me to say that I stated that the information I received from this gentleman was amply corroborated by my own experience? I mean as to the handing of letters from the authorities in Dublin Castle to the District Inspectors for the Resident Magistrates.

Mr. GIBSON: What I was alluding to was the hon. Member's statement here to-night in my own hearing. What he said was that the information he received in this matter was from a gentleman well known to me who was behind the scenes in Dublin Castle. All I can say is that that gentleman who is referred to as being behind the scenes, and who has given the hon. Member the information we have heard, must be much more behind the scenes than Her Majesty's Attorney General for Ireland. It might be supposed that I, at all events, should have some knowledge of the facts which this gentleman to whom reference has been made is said to have such complete knowledge of—this gentleman to whom the hon. Member says he will take the trouble to communicate, asking for his authority for his name to be mentioned in this House. I should be very glad to hear this gentleman's name mentioned—this gentleman who is known to me, with whom I am on terms of familiarity, and who makes a statement of this kind. When I hear his name I shall be able to deal with his allegation. At present, however, so far as I am aware from my limited knowledge as Attorney General for Ireland, no such practice as that described by the hon. Gentleman has ever existed. What the hon. Member states in confirmation of the allegation he has made is of a purely imaginative character. He says he has seen letters given to the Resident Magistrates on the platforms of railways.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Always.

MR. GIBSON: "Always," says he. So it seems that the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Kerry is constantly in the habit of watching the proceedings of the police authorities and the Resident Magistrates on the platforms of railway stations; but I should have thought, from my own experience of his action in this House, that he has other things to occupy his attention in connection with his Parliamentary duties.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I am a newspaper man in Ireland, and my business is to attend at railway stations when there is occasion to do so. In troublous times my business is to watch the movements of troublous Governments.

MR. GIBSON: I certainly understood that the hon. Member was in pretty constant attendance in this House; but I now gather that he has a kind of double personality, so that since the passing of the Crimes Act he has been apparently sitting and voting in this House, and has also attended at the railway platforms in Ireland. The Crimes Act was passed in July, and the hon. Member has been in attendance in the House since then, voting on all Divisions, and, notwithstanding that, he tells us that he has the remarkable gift of being able to see letters presented at railway stations in remote parts of Ireland to Resident Magistrates.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I am very loth to interrupt the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but I am sure he does not quite see what he is doing. He is making an accusation as to the impossibility of the facts which I stated. What I said was that I had seen these things done under Coercion Acts. I would point out to the right hon. and learned Gentleman that this is not the first Coercion Act which has been passed in this country against Ireland, but about the 85th. The occurrences which I have described to the House have not only been reported to me, but I have seen them take place myself on scores of occasions, without exaggeration. The right hon. and learned Gentleman will bear in mind that I said that I did not want to make an accusation against the present Government specially in the matter, but that what I complained of was the practice in Dublin Castle.

MR. GIBSON: I understood that the hon. Gentleman was referring to the Criminal Law Amendment Act, which was passed into law on the 19th of July last; but I now understand that he refers to 85 previous Coercion Acts, and the connection which has existed between the Government and the Resident Magistrates as to the administration of those Acts. I am not able to say what has taken place on railway platforms under those Acts of Parliament, and under previous administrations. I am only concerned with my own administration, and, so far as the secrets of the prison house are revealed to me, I must say I have never heard anything of the kind which has been related by the hon. Gentleman. I never heard of any interference with the decisions of the Resident Magistrates on the part of the Government. These magistrates have got some small executive duties to perform, such as were performed by Mr. Beckett on the occasion of these evictions to which reference has been made. The hon. Member is aware that in cases of riot, or in cases where public order is involved, the Resident Magistrates do, to some extent, exercise executive functions. The hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) will know that, in connection with the riots in Belfast, the Resident Magistrates were continually in the streets taking part in the proceedings. But no doubt it is desirable, and all will agree with me in this, that persons in a judicial capacity should be entrusted as little as possible with administrative functions. However, for Resident Magistrates to do what I have described has been the custom for some time past in Ireland. With regard to the observations of the hon. Member for North Westmeath (Mr. Tuite) in regard to Mr. Beckett, it is plain that that gentleman could not have taken any part in the proceedings in question, owing to the fact that he is not in Ireland. Having regard to what has fallen from my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary, I do not think it is necessary for me to say anything further in justification of the Resident Magistrates in Ireland. My right hon. Friend has given these gentlemen the highest testimonial. Then I would remind hon. Members opposite of the axiom of one of their own distinguished friends with regard to approbation and reprobation of the Resident Magistrates in Ireland. For goodness sake, when they receive the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan) into their camp, let them take him with all his allegations around him, including his allegation, which he has never disavowed, that the Resident Magistrates do their duty like men, loyally and honestly.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: Will the right hon. and learned Gentleman give me an answer as to the two Resident Magistrates I referred to, one as having been punished and the other rewarded for the action taken by them at the Killarney Petty Sessions?

Mr. GIBSON: I explained at an earlier period of the evening that I have nothing to say with regard to the Resident Magistrates. It does not rest with me to take any part in the administration of justice, except to prosecute; but I may say generally that I am satisfied of this—that though it is necessary from time to time, in the interests of the Public Service, to move these Resident Magistrates about from one place to another, the removal of the gentlemen he has referred to had nothing whatever to do with their action on the Bench. The view entertained by an hon. Member opposite I believe is that Resident Magistrates should not become, like oysters, too much attached to one locality, but that it is desirable to move them about, putting them in different places, so that they may not become too much attached to any one particular view, or any one particular interest. Yet we find that when the Government move these gentlemen about, though it is a matter of every day occurrence, it is said that it is owing to a desire to punish the magistrate, or to show displeasure at the action which he has taken on the Bench. I think that such a charge is entirely unfounded—as unfounded as other charges which have been brought in this House. I can only say that I am convinced the hon. Member is entirely mistaken in this matter. I do not blame the hon. Member himself, but I must say he has the misfortune of having a highly imaginative correspondent.

Mr. EDWARD HARRINGTON: I have the advantage of personal observation in the matters to which I have referred. The right hon. and learned Gentleman has not the advantage of personal observation extending far back in the Government of Ireland, nor is he, although responsible, supplied with a sufficient amount of information to enable him to answer the questions which I have put to him to-night. This is how we stand. I have made certain charges which have come up to the time of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's administration, and he stands upon this point. He says that this occurrence has not taken place in his time. He is here to-night as the sole Representative of the Government of Ireland. I have learned that certain things of a questionable character have occurred in Ireland; I have questioned him about these things; he is paid a large salary to attend to matters of this kind; he has the aid of Dublin Castle; and notwithstanding this he is not able to give the House one single fact in answer to my statements. It is all very well to make general assertions. I did did not think the right hon. and learned Gentleman would stoop to assertions, certainly not such as he has made. He has denied the truth of these statements I have made to the effect that it is the practice of Dublin Castle to send down a file of instructions to Resident Magistrates as to the decisions they are to give. He says—"I have never known such a thing occur during my time." What has been his time, Sir? He says that I have attended regularly in this House, and have been present at nearly all its Divisions. I have, Sir; but then, so has he; and what, then, has been his time in Ireland? How much time has he spent at Dublin Castle? Out of his own mouth I can convict him. According to his own announcement here the other night, he did not know of the occurrence of the Westmeath case; he wired to Dublin, and his Colleague the Solicitor General for Ireland knew nothing about it. It is plain, therefore, that he is not at all in touch with Dublin Castle. What is his answer to-night? "I have been Attorney General for one month, but yet have not heard of these proceedings, and therefore they have not happened." Surely that is a fine sample of Dublin Castle logic to endeavour to palm off on this House? He says—"I have been in my present position for one month; I have attended to the various Votes; I have watched the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Kerry, and I have seen that he has attended to every Vote as well; and therefore he cannot be cognizant of anything that takes place in Dublin Castle." Well, Sir, I have had the advantage of seeing Coercion Acts worked by other Gentlemen sitting where the right hon. and learned Gentleman now sits. I have had the advantage, moreover, of knowing the right hon. and learned Gentleman's Predecessor, who is now blooming on the Bench in Ireland, and I know how this matter is likely to be pushed on by such as he. The right hon. and learned Gentleman's Predecessor knows all about the system of which I complain, and that is our great trouble, for these are the Gentlemen who have to administer the law in Ireland from Dublin Castle. All these Gentlemen get the very same training; and we know how they keep back, as the very last commodity reluctantly to be delivered to this House, the real truth in these cases. I challenge the right hon. and learned Gentleman again—I warn him that this is a charge which will not stop here, but which will ring throughout the land. There are plenty of witnesses as to what takes place—there are plenty of people who can speak positively to the fact that it has been the practice, under former Governments in Ireland, to prepare a "file of instructions," technically so-called, in Dublin Castle, and send it down to the Resident Magistrates who have the trial of a case, and I say, in corroboration of that, that I myself have seen these files pass into the hands of the local officials. I do not say that I have been to every railway station in the country to watch the Resident Magistrates as these files of instructions have come in; but I have been to many of them, having felt it my duty to do so, and I may say that I have very often sacrificed my own business to do the duty I am now describing. I have in every case seen the District Inspector hand by letter what I believe to have been correctly described to me as private instructions to the Resident Magistrates; and however much the right hon. and learned Gentleman may pooh-pooh the matter, he cannot assert, on his own responsibility, that what I describe does not take place. If he does, let the House take his assertion for what it is worth; let hon. Members take his and mine together—his statement, with his £4,000 a-year behind it, and mine, with only the trust and confidence of the people of Ireland behind it. I do not say that the right hon. and learned Gentleman has not told the truth so far as his constituents have sent him here to tell the truth, and so far as his information may enable him to do it; but I assert that the system I have described is the constant practice of the Government in Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman's assertions are not very strong on this case. He has been one month Attorney General for Ireland, and yet he does not know of these occurrences.

MR. GIBSON: The hon. Gentleman, in the excitement of oratory, has rather forgotten the facts with which he is dealing. I have been in my present Office more than one month. I have been nearly three months Attorney General for Ireland; and the hon. Member seems to forget that I was Solicitor General for Ireland from the year 1885, and that everything known to my right hon. and learned Friend the late Attorney General was also known to me.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: The Crimes Act has not been in existence more than a month or so; and at the period of which the right hon. and learned Gentleman speaks there was no case before the Resident Magistrates in regard to which such a file of instructions as I have referred to could have been sent down. I have stated that this is a practice which exists under the administration of Coercion Acts in Ireland. The practice is this. The Irish Government in the first place pick out two Resident Magistrates from amongst the worst and most prejudiced magistrates they can find, and then, as if that were not bad enough, when a case is about to be tried they send down from Dublin Castle a file of instructions describing the characters of the accused and the kind of decision which is to be given. That is my allegation, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman says he does not know of the existence of such a system. I ask him does he know anything about what has taken place under the Crimes Act within the last month? What does he know? Who has dictated the prosecutions? Who dictated the prosecution in the County Westmeath?—who has dictated the prosecution in the County of Kerry? The case I refer to in Kerry is that of a person who is charged with endeavouring to retake possession. In this case the person was enticed into the house under false pretences by those who are now undertaking the prosecution. Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman know of these circumstances? If he does, he ought to be ashamed of them; but I do not believe that he does. I know the circumstances I describe to have taken place within the past fortnight in the County of Kerry. I know a case where a magistrate has gone out to a farm from which a tenant has been evicted, where he has seen the evicted tenant's child, 10 years of age, and has sent the child on that to bring in the father, and when the father has come in, this magistrate has prosecuted him under the Coercion Act for retaking possession. Does the right hon. and learned Gentleman know of these things? If he does, I ask is such a case as this a thing that he has reason to be proud of? If he does not know anything about these things, then it does not go to disprove the truth of my assertion as to those files of instructions being sent down to the Resident Magistrates, that he is ignorant of the existence of the practice. In the cases in question the files of instructions may not have been sent down yet. They may be sent down in a few days; and this leads me to point out that we are about to plunge into the darkness of the Recess, and that we desire to have all the information we can get before we leave this place for some months, and are deprived of the opportunity of throwing the light of publicity upon the Irish Executive by putting Questions and raising discussions in this House. We ask the Committee, by an expression of opinion, to interpose between the Irish Government and the victims of their operations. If there is a case to be tried under the Crimes Acts let the Resident Magistrates be indifferently chosen, except, of course, for legal knowledge, and let them not receive instructions as to the history of the men to be tried and as to the decisions they are to give. Let the cases come before the magistrates blindly, and when the magistrates want to inflict a heavy punishment, then let them ask, if they like, as to the antecedents of the prisoners, and then let the District Inspector or any other witness brought forward on the part of the Crown say whether or not there have been previous convictions. Do not let the fountains of justice be poisoned by putting into the hands of the Resident Magistrates files of instructions from Dublin Castle, saying—"Oh, an enemy to the landlords! An old offender! A troublesome character! A thorn in the side of the landlords! A very troublesome fellow!" Why, if I were brought up before two Resident Magistrates and this file of instructions dealing with my case were sent down, it would be as long as any Petition ever presented in this House, in order to represent the ideas of the legal functionaries in Dublin Castle as to my personal character. The object, of course, would be that I should be submitted to their idea of a trial, and receive their idea of justice. Trial under these circumstances is a mockery. It is rendered a mockery by this sending down files of instructions from Dublin Castle. A great deal of the information contained in those files is obtained in this way. A lot of stupid policemen are put into plain clothes, and they have the duty put upon them of watching certain men and certain localities, and the pay and easement of these gentlemen in plain clothes depends on their making certain reports every day. Of course, they do furnish reports to Dublin Castle, and it is the reflex of these which comes back from Dublin Castle to the Resident Magistrate. I represent the case as it is, and having put the facts before the Committee, and having heard what the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland has to say in reply, I have only to remark that I am satisfied if he is.

Mr. HARRIS: I trust we shall have some statement from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland respecting the provision to be made for the attendance of two Resident Magistrates to adjudicate under the Crimes Act.

MR. GIBSON: My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland has stated the views of the Government with reference to the administraction of the Crimes Act. My right hon. Friend has already explained that when parties are summoned under the Crimes Act, care will be taken by the Government to see that a Bench of two Resident Magistrates shall be constituted, so that the case shall be determined on the first opportunity in order that the parties shall not be subjected to delay, and inconvenience, and possibly unnecessary expense. Of course, the hon. Member for East Galway understands that when a summons is taken out it is returnable on a fixed day, the ordinary Petty Session day, and in that case, of course, it will be the duty of the Resident Magistrates to arrange that there shall be a properly constituted Court to decide the case. But where a man is arrested on warrant he is brought before a Justice on the earliest possible opportunity. There may not be an opportunity for the case to be adjudicated upon immediately, and it may be necessary to bring the prisoner before the ordinary Petty Sessions Court, and that Petty Sessions Court may not assemble for a considerable period after the arrest. Suppose he were taken before the Petty Sessions Court the hon. Gentleman will see that one Resident Magistrate may only be in attendance; indeed, it would be impossible to have two Resident Magistrates in every Petty Sessions district in the country. Now, in such a case as that we must of course do the best we can. If the arrest takes place at such a period that it is impossible to have an immediate inquiry before a properly constituted Bench, I assure the hon. Gentleman that every effort will be made by us that there shall not be any unnecessary delay. I do not think I can give the hon. Gentleman any further assurance, but I admit that parties who are proceeded against should not be left long in the state of uncertainty. I think hon. Gentlemen will agree with me that we have done our best this evening to answer all the questions that have been addressed to us, and that we may now reasonably ask the Committee to agree to the Vote.

MR. GILHOOLY: I should like to know whether it is intended to adopt any safeguard in cases where the Resident Magistrates have a discretionary power to accept or refuse bail. I have already referred to the case of the young men who were imprisoned for five weeks in consequence of the refusal on the part of the magistrates to accept bail. In that case the immediate predecessor of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland considered that there had been a gross abuse of the power of the magistrates. I wish to know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman will give any pledge or promise that in future such cases shall not arise, and that Resident Magistrates before refusing bail shall submit depositions to him?

MR. GIBSON: That would be quite outside the province of the Attorney General. There are two classes of cases, one in which bail can be given as a matter of right, and the other in which the acceptance of bail is a matter within the discretion of the magistrates. In the latter class of case regard is had to two considerations; first of all the nature and gravity of the offence; and, secondly, whether the person charged is likely to turn up for trial. It would be out of all question for the officer who prosecutes to give instructions to the Court which is to decide the case as to the granting of bail. It is quite impossible for him to do anything of the kind. I am confident that the Resident Magistrates will exercise their jurisdiction upon the principles I have mentioned. The hon. Gentleman has referred to the case in which my predecessor considered the non-acceptance of bail an abuse of the discretionary power of magistrates. My experience is that magistrates, not merely Resident Magistrates, commit cases for trial at the Assizes on information which appears to show that there is a case. The Attorney General is bound to act for himself, and if the information laid before him does not, in his opinion, warrant further prosecution, he declines to direct one. I have myself refused to direct further prosecutions. I may call the attention of the hon. Gentleman to the circumstance that if bail is not allowed the parties who feel aggrieved can always apply to the Court above.

MR. GILHOOLY: The expense of such a proceeding is very great.

Mr. GIBSON: I admit that the expense of such an operation is rather considerable, and the uncertainty of its success great. Of course it would be much more convenient that bail should be granted by the magistrates. I think the hon. Gentleman must allow the law to be administered by the magistrates on the principle which, I say, regulates the acceptance or refusal of bail.

Mr. GILHOOLY: Is it not a fact that the magistrates often refuse bail in cases where the witnesses for the prosecution are men of bad character?

Mr. GIBSON: The only test in the case is whether the magistrates believe the witnesses are telling the truth or not. The Court is bound to act on its discretion. The hon. Gentleman has mentioned a case of the circumstances of which I know nothing.

Mr. GILHOOLY: In the case I have mentioned the principal witness swore on the 11th of January that he did not know the men, but on the 9th of February he swore that he did know them. Were the depositions in this case of such a character that the Resident Magistrates ought to have committed the men to prison for five weeks?

Mr. GIBSON: I beg the hon. Gentleman not to press me for an opinion upon this evidence because I have known the converse. I have known a man swear he did know people, and seven days afterwards swear he did not know them at all. The question was on which occasion he was telling the truth. I earnestly hope we may now be allowed to proceed with the Business. I certainly have endeavoured, to the best of my ability, to meet the views of hon. Members.

Mr. FLYNN: I have only a few observations to make before we proceed to a Division. I have listened to a greater portion of the debate, and I must say I think we have made out our case. We have shown that the magistrates of Ireland are men incapable of properly discharging the delicate and difficult duties so often entrusted to them. We have shown that they are, as a class, men who are not possessed of legal knowledge or legal experience, and as such are not to be entrusted with the large and drastic powers which are given in the summary jurisdiction and the private inquiry clauses of the Crimes Act. However, we have had our say and there is no use in prolonging the controversy. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland have defended these magistrates. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General has stood up for their competency, and he has vindicated their claim to legal knowledge and experience. We shall watch the action of these magistrates during the coming winter and spring, because the chances are very strong that unless the Government give these gentlemen to understand that they must carry out the law within the limits of strict legality, next year—when the Estimates are brought on—the discussion will be most protracted and will amount to one of the most minute and most searching criticisms that has ever taken place in Committee of Supply.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 109; Noes 35: Majority 74. — (Div. List, No. 450.) [9.40. p.m.]

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £424,051, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

Mr. CONWAY (Leitrim, N.): Mr. Courtney, I approach this Vote with some misgiving, because our experience has been that promises have been made yearly that the grievances that exist in regard to public education in Ireland shall be attended to. I approach it also in some misgiving because I fear that the reply to the various points which I shall raise will be of a somewhat perfunctory character. This Vote invites attention from many points of view. From a National point of view, it contrasts with education in England and Scotland; and it invites criticism as compared with the English and Scotch Vote on account of the total absence of anything like public control of education in Ireland. We have also the cost of the administration to take into consideration, and its relative smallness as contrasted with the educational grant made in England and Scotland is worthy of notice. For the purpose of my argument it would be just as well that I should point out that in England, according to the Blue Book issued only last week, a sum of over £3,000,000 was voted for the education of 4,500,000 children. Four and a-half million children on the books. In the Blue Book issued on Saturday morning with reference to Scotch education, we find that over £500,000 was voted for the education of 615,000 children. In Ireland the Vote is practically stationary, and we have only £750,000. That is to say, that if we eliminate the grants for the encouragement of agricultural and other technical instruction, we have £750,000 voted for the education of 1,071,000 children. If we contrast the sums, we find that Ireland gets not nearly so much as Scotland per head, and very much less than the amount of money voted in respect of each child in England. We must take into account that in Ireland the children are largely educated under the national system. We have self-sacrificing people at home, we have the Christian Brothers who take charge of a considerable percentage of children, but practically speaking the education of Ireland is in the hands of the National Commissioners. Now, in England the children in elementary schools are the children of the poor. There is a large middle-class population in England, and a considerable population attending high-class schools, so that if we put the children of Ireland on a par with England, we arrive at once at the conclusion that, as compared with England, Ireland is very badly treated in the matter of education. In Scotland, too, there is generosity. The State is very generous to the people of Scotland so far as the education of their children is concerned. But, Sir, there is many a comparison which may be instituted with a view of driving home the fact that the help given towards the education of the children of Ireland is most miserable. Last week a discussion took place with regard to the cost of police. We find that in the counties and boroughs of England the police are assisted to the tune of £800,000 a-year, and that education is assisted to the extent of £3,500,000 a-year. In Scotland the police grants only amount to £149,000, and the grants for education to over £500,000; but in Ireland, in the country in which the people are taunted with not being well educated, hon. Members opposite frequently get up and talk about the illiteracy of Ireland—£1,500,000 is voted for the police, and only £750,000 for public education. I think that when this condition of things is realized, it ought to bring a blush to the cheeks of the Gentlemen who sit on the Treasury Bench. Both political Parties have sinned with regard to public education in Ireland. Now, since the National Commissioners undertook the control of Irish education there has been no public control, none whatever. The Commissioners employ the whole machinery for the education of over 1,000,000 children, and under their system there is no less than 10,996 teachers. These teachers are employed in educating over 1,000,000 of children. You would think that the Commissioners would be somewhat generous to these teachers; you would think they would treat them fairly if not generously. Especially when it is laid down in one of their rules that the national teachers shall be persons of character and sentiment, of calm temperament and discretion; that they shall be imbued with the spirit of peace and obedience to law, and be loyal to their Sovereign; that they shall not only possess the art of communicating knowledge, but be capable of moulding the mind of youth, and of giving to the power which education confers useful direction. These are the qualities which the local managers of schools have to look for in teachers when making a choice, and these are the qualities which the Commissioners are anxious to encourage and reward. This is the effect of one of the rules extracted from the list of rules set forth for the benefit of the teachers of Ireland. There are no less than nine different admirable qualities found requisite under this particular rule, and if the teachers possess these qualities they are told by the Commissioners that they will receive encouragement and reward. Now, I say that education in Ireland is practically under the control of the Commissioners of Education; the teachers are directly under the thumb of the Commissioners, they are not allowed to take part in any political meetings, they are not allowed to use their judgment as to when they shall go in for examinations to raise their certificates—all promotion is given through the Inspectors. If teachers want to change their situations they have to give a month's notice to the Inspector, so that the course of the teachers from the time they are classed to the time when their services are finished is persued by the National Commissioners of Ireland. This brings us to the consideration of the character of the work these men do. The character of the work the Irish teachers do compares favourably with that produced in England and in Scotland. To enable us to estimate the character of this work we have the Reports I mentioned just now before us. According to a recent Return the percentage of children in Ireland passing in reading is 93·6, in writing 96, and in arithmetic 83·3. These are good results, and, if put side by side with the results attained in England and Scotland, one would think the National Commissioners would be warranted in giving to Irish teachers similar salaries to those given to English and Scotch teachers. The results, according to the Blue Book, of the voluntary schools in Ireland, are, in reading 91·4, writing 83·41, arithmetic 79·58. In particular schools the results are a trifle better, reading 93·31, writing 86·49, arithmetic 83·69, but still in particular schools, the success attained is not greater than the success attained by our National teachers in Ireland. In England, the results are, reading 94·05, writing 91·07, arithmetic 86·78, so that there can be no complaints made as to the character of the work done by the Irish teachers. The results certainly bear favourable comparison with those attained in England and Scotland. Now, just let us compare the salaries paid to teachers in Ireland with those paid to teachers in England and Scotland. The average salary of a master in England is £120 17*s.* 6*d.*, and the average salary of a mistress in England is £74 4*s.* 11*d.* In Scotland, the average salary of a master is £135 8*s.* 3*d.*, and of a mistress £64 18*s.* 7*d.* So that we have compared with the results of 1874, four years after the new Code came into operation, a marked improvement in the condition and prospects of English and Scotch teachers. In England there are 251 masters who receive over £300 a-year, and there are no less than 1,433 who receive over £200 a-year. In England there are 329 mistresses who receive over £200 a-year. In Scotland there are 170 masters receiving over £300 a-year, and five mistresses who receive over £200 a-year, and also 552 masters who receive over £200 a-year. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. A. J. Balfour) was recently Chief Secretary for Scotland, and, no doubt, his attention has been called to the Blue Book relating to Scotch education. From that Blue Book, the right hon. Gentleman will see that there are a certain number of masters who receive £400, £500, £600, and £700 a-year, and I believe that one master of an elementary school receives £800 a-year. So that, when I come to talk about the masters in Ireland, who are classed according to their certificates, and who receive certificate money plus result fees, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not begin by pointing out that certain masters in Ireland are receiving £130 to £140 a-year. The average salary of a master in Ireland, as far as we can make out from the Returns, is £57 9*s.*; £57 9*s.* against £123 on the English side, and £135 on the Scotch side. The average salary of a head master in Ireland is £51 14*s.* 7*d.*, and of an assistant mistress £38 8*s.* 8*d.* These salaries are from all sources. When we take into consideration that the results produced by the Irish teachers are equal to the results produced by teachers in England and Scotland, I think the time has come when similar rewards ought to be given to the Irish teachers. Now, one great grievance the Irish teachers has is, that the result fees are made contingent upon certain circumstances. I think that the Government should do away with anything like contingencies. There are managers of schools in this House, men who take a great interest in their schools, and I appeal to them whether it is not the rule in England to engage masters, quite irrespective of any results they may obtain. A manager says to a master, "I will give you so much a-year. I expect you to attend to your duties, and I expect certain results. Whatever the results are, I shall pay you such a sum a-year." A master in England expects a salary down, and we think that such a rule ought to apply to Ireland. The Irish teachers do uncommonly good work, and they ought to receive a definite salary, and not to be bothered or disturbed in mind as to whether they will receive full salary or not. The Irish teachers' position is affected by the uncertainty of pay, and they ask that some amelioration of their condition shall be effected. I believe that, in regard to salaries, the third-class teachers of Ireland would be satisfied if they received £1 per week on their certificates. As it is, they only receive £35 a-year. I believe the second-class teachers would be satisfied with 30*s.* a-week, and that the first-class teachers would be satisfied with £2 per week, or with something approaching that sum. Something certainly ought to be done in order to relieve the minds of these men from the anxiety attending on the uncertainty of their remuneration which exists throughout the year. They ask, in the first place, that something more definite shall be given to them, and I believe they would be satisfied with certain result fees after these sums were given. This, of course, is not too much to ask from the Government. We ought to remember that before the Pension Fund was started the Government generously gave £10,000 per annum for gratuities to old teachers; but, when the Pension Fund was started, this sum was no longer demanded from the Treasury. The Government might fairly fall back on some temporary grant until a definite scheme of payment was fixed upon. Over and over again the Government have promised to look into the question of the position of the teachers in Ireland. I am perfectly well aware that the Session is drawing to a close; but I think that the Government might acknowledge the justice of the teachers' claims by making a temporary grant. This brings me to a Question I put on the Paper some time ago. In that Question I pointed out that the teachers had suffered great loss owing to the non-contributory Unions failing in their subscriptions, and I asked for a grant of £10,000, out of which the salaries of the teachers might be increased. I was told I was a simpleton for asking so much; but I do not think it is too much to ask the Treasury to make some grant towards the salaries of the teachers even at this late period of the Session. If the Government would give us a promise that the whole system of payment in Ireland shall be reviewed and placed on a basis similar to that in England and Scotland and Wales, we should hail such a promise with satisfaction. Now, Sir, there is another point which I wish to raise in this House, and it is that of residences. The Board have striven to get managers and patrons of schools to take up the question of residences; but it is not a question for the managers and patrons, but it is a question for the Commissioners themselves. The Commissioners have the security of the houses, they have the security of the schools as it were, and they ought to be satisfied with one security, and give grants for building school houses without so much red-tapeism. At present the improvement and repair of the residences which are at the command of masters are all done at the cost of the masters; these certainly ought to be done at the cost of the Commissioners. The houses themselves ought to be roomy; they ought to be very attractive and well-ventilated. I hold that the basis of the well-being of a nation lies with the school teachers of the country. So that when I advocate their cause I advocate a cause which is likely to produce beneficial results to the great Empire of which we are so proud. I hope the question of residences will be dealt with in a more liberal and large-hearted manner than it has hitherto been dealt with. The Commissioners are always complaining that the managers and patrons of schools do not take up this question of residences; but I maintain that it is the fault of the Commissioners themselves. In many cases in which residences are provided, masters are put to the trouble of walking three or four miles to and from school every day. The question of salaries and that of residences are two of the great points that trouble our teachers; then they also complain about the system of pension. They are disturbed because they must be 65 years old before they can receive a pension. When you understand that a lad goes into school at 18 years of age, and works until he is 65 years of age, it will give you an idea of the length of service he is required to put in. The teachers of Ireland would like to see, instead of an Age Clause, a Service Clause; they would like to see 35 years' service put in on the part of men, and 30 years' service on the part of women. There is precedent for this. It is not definitely laid down, but it is understood that a master in England may get a pension, subject to the approval of the Education Department, after 30 years' service. There are certain pensions given every year, and 30 years' service is the basis on which these pensions are given. In asking for 35 years' service on the part of a man and 30 years' service on the part of a woman, I do not think we are asking too much for our teachers, who do good work. These are the chief points I wish to raise. I have shown that the work of the Irish teachers is good in quality, and that it bears comparison with the work done in England. I have shown how well the English masters are paid, how well the Scotch masters are paid, and how miserably the Irish masters are paid. I ask some relief in the matter of salaries; and inasmuch as the masters at home are practically civil servants, I ask that the question of residences should be taken up, and that some relief should be given in the matter of pensions. There has been a threat that the services of the third-class masters will be dispensed with unless they obtain head masters' certificates. The men have given great services to the nation, and I appeal to the Treasury not to dismiss them without good and sufficient reason. Then, again, the first-class assistants complain of their scale of pay. They receive pay just at the same rate as third-class masters—namely, £31 per annum. I think that if the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will take these points into consideration, and do something for the amelioration of the condition of the Irish teachers generally, he will receive the gratitude of this deserving body of people.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Perhaps it would be convenient to the Committee that I should rise at once and reply to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Leitrim (Mr. Conway). I will take the various points he has touched upon in the order in which he has mentioned them. The first accusation is that the control of teaching in Ireland is vested not in the localities, but in what he describes as an irresponsible Board. Well, the Board may not be responsible to the different localities, but the Board is responsible to Parliament, and that seems not to be an irrational plan when you are dealing with a system of education in which the cost is borne not by the different localities, but by Parliament. In England, undoubtedly, those responsible are the localities in the first instance; but in England the localities bear the cost, or a very large proportion of the cost, of education. In Ireland there is not the same ground for placing responsibility upon the localities. because in Ireland a very small proportion of the cost of education is borne by the localities. My recollection of the figures is that in England about 23*s*. per child per year, counting attendances, is paid by the localities. In Ireland only about 5*s*. per child per year is paid, and yet in Ireland, though a very small and insignificant fraction of the cost of education is borne by the localities, with the localities practically rests the responsibility of appointing and dismissing the teachers. Under these circumstances, I think the first accusation of the hon. Gentleman falls to the ground. He then went on to complain that whereas the Education Vote is, as he says, stationary as regards Ireland, it is progressive as regards England and Scotland. But, Sir, I do not think he can have had in his mind when he made that statement the figures regarding the payments of teachers which have obtained during the last 20 or 30 years.

MR. CONWAY: The salaries were reviewed in 1875.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. Gentleman will see that I am meeting his arguments quite fairly. I will take the amount paid by the State towards the salaries of the teachers of the first class from the year 1854 to the year 1887.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): How many teachers are there in the first class?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not care what class I take, I will take the lowest class if the hon. and gallant Gentleman desires me to do so. I will take the years 1854, 1864, 1874, and 1885. Now, I find that the average pay of Irish teachers of the first class has been in 1854, £36; in 1864, £54; in 1874, £87; and in 1885, £101. So that in the 30 years which intervened between 1854 and 1885 the salaries of the Irish teachers of the first class, paid from Imperial sources, have risen from £36 to £101.

COLONEL NOLAN: How many teachers are there in the first class?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: And this is a Vote which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Conway) describes as a non-progressive Vote.

COLONEL NOLAN: How many teachers are there in the first class?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not got the statistics with me, but I do not think the point is material.

MR. CONWAY: In averaging I took head masters and assistants.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I fail to see how that affects the matter. I will now take the lowest class if that will satisfy the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel Nolan).

COLONEL NOLAN: No; I want the number of teachers of the first class.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I have met the case perfectly fairly. I am dealing with the argument of the hon. Member for North Leitrim that this Vote is a stationary Vote. I think I have shown that so far as the salaries of the first-class teachers, which are paid from Imperial funds, are concerned, this Vote is certainly progressive. Now, what have been the salaries of the lowest class of teachers? In 1854 the salaries of these teachers amounted to £15, in the year 1864 to £19, in 1874 to £36, and in 1885 to £51. So that, taking the figures of the lowest class, the progression or the actual development of the supply from Imperial sources to the salaries of these teachers of the lowest class in Ireland has been from £15 in 1854 to £51 in 1885. I think that I need not go into any further figures. After this, the hon. Gentleman, I am sure, will hardly maintain that this Vote, so far as Imperial contributions to the teachers' salaries are concerned, has been a stationary Vote. Then the hon. Gentleman went on to say that the Irish teachers were much worse off than the English and Scotch teachers. Well, Sir, I am not prepared to deny that the salaries of the Irish teachers are lower than the salaries of English and Scotch teachers. I do not deny it; but the question is whether that is a thing which can or ought to be remedied by the action of the Imperial Parliament, and I apprehend that in considering that question more than one argument is to be taken into account. First of all, we have to consider the point on which I have already dwelt—namely, what is the comparative contribution in the three countries from local sources to teachers' salaries? I allow that in Ireland the teachers' salaries are lower than in England, but, as I have already stated to the Committee, in England and in Scotland the contribution from local sources is about 23*s.* or 24*s.* per child per year, while in Ireland it is only about 5*s.* per head per year. No; 7*s.* 4½*d.* is the exact amount. Now, to ask this House to contribute an increased sum over the large sum that is already contributed to Irish education, considering how little is contributed from local sources, is rather hard on the English taxpayer. But that is not the only point we have to take into consideration. We have to consider what is the comparative amount of work which is being done respectively by Irish teachers on the one hand, and by English and Scotch teachers on the other hand. Now, I find that there is one English teacher, on the average, to about 83 pupils. In Ireland there is a teacher, on the average, to about 41 pupils. So that the amount of work, estimated by the number of pupils taught, is rather more than double in England what it is in Ireland; and that alone—leaving out the arguments I have already adduced—is a ground for making some distinction between the amount of the salaries paid in England and the amount of the salaries paid in Ireland. Sir, there is a further argument—are the Irish teachers as good as the English teachers? I apprehend that it is perfectly certain they are not.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory): You will not get them for the money.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ossory Division of Queen's County appears to think that we should pay teachers more than their market value, and that their value as teachers will increase according to the salaries you choose to pay them. That is not the ordinary method in which business is conducted on this side of the Channel, and I do not think it is on the other. But, as a matter of fact, take as a test—I admit it is a rough one, but it is a test up to a certain point—the number of teachers you have got from Training Colleges in Ireland. I think it will not be denied by those who have interested themselves in the subject of Irish education that the number of Irish teachers who have gone through Training Colleges is incomparably smaller than the corresponding number in England and Scotland. Though I admit that is a test you cannot apply absolutely, it is an indication which is supported by all other indications we have on the subject, that Irish teachers have not yet reached the standard attained by their English and Scotch *confrères*. There is a decided progress visible on the part of Irish teachers. They are increasingly able to pass examinations which do give them a larger salary. Now, Sir, the hon. Member for North Leitrim has complained of the practice of paying Irish teachers to a certain extent by result fees, and he has actually compared in this respect the Irish system with the English system. But he seems to forget that while in Ireland the largest proportion of a teacher's salary is a fixed salary irrespective of result fees, in England the whole contribution from the State—call it by what name you will — is entirely and solely paid by results; so that if the Irish teacher has ground for complaint in the fact that part of his salary depends upon the results of his educational efforts, how much greater reason has his English brother to complain that the whole contribution of the State is determined by the results he produces, and by no other consideration whatever? Then the hon. Gentleman went on to say that the teachers of Ireland had a grievance in regard to residences. Sir, I am bound to say that if there be any failure in the provision of teachers' residences in Ireland, it does not depend upon the Board of Education in Ireland, or upon the efforts that this House has made towards providing these residences. Under the law as it at present stands money can be lent by this House at 5 per cent. for purposes of teachers' residences. This 5 per cent includes not only the interest upon the capital sum expended, but practically pays it back in 35 years, so that the actual interest does not amount to more than 3½ per cent, and of that 5 per cent, half is paid by the the Board of Education if the buildings are *boná fide* used as teachers' residences. Now, I ask the Committee whether it is possible to make more liberal arrangements than those which have been provided by the State for these purposes?

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that some of the landlords will not give land for the purpose of building teachers' residences?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have never yet heard that any Irish landlords have shown any unwillingness to dispose of their land on fair tenure. Therefore, if you take into account these facts, first, that the payment of one-half the money which is made by the Government is supplemented by the Boards of Guardians in Ireland, and, secondly, that England and Ireland are on an equality with regard to the taking of land for teachers' residences by compulsion, you will, I think, admit that if there is a grievance in this respect in Ireland, it exists in tenfold force on this side of the Channel. When the hon. Member for North Leitrim compared the position of the National School teachers in Ireland with the position of the National School teachers in England, I think he might have stated to the Committee the fact that in England there is no State pension fund whatever, while in Ireland there is a sum of £1,000,000 and more set apart for this purpose. There is no corresponding fund in England.

Mr. CONWAY: The principle of pensions is accepted in England. [Mr. A. J. Balfour: No, no!] I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. If he will refer to the Returns issued to Parliament he will see that a certain amount of money is allowed for the purpose of pensions to National School teachers. There is a difference in form, but the principle is the same.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member for North Leitrim has, I think, not made himself acquainted with the history of the English system. Under the old system, which is dying out, there was some provision made for teachers' pensions; at present there is no such provision made.

Mr. CONWAY: I wish to state that a statement has been issued from the Education Office, to the effect that a friend of mine, on his retiring from the service, will receive a pension. Of course, the principle is that those who were teachers before 1862 would be entitled to pensions; but you will, in the course of a few years, extend the principle to the years 1865 and 1870.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman has founded his whole case on the experience of one of his friends, and that friend was a teacher before the year 1862. The hon. Gentleman is in error in saying that the past state of things would exist in the future. That, will not be the case. In England we no longer recognize that the State is responsible in any way whatever for providing pensions for teachers; but in Ireland the teachers are so much better off that £1,300,000 has been allocated from the Irish Church Fund for the purpose of providing pensions for all time, and therefore I repeat that if there is an Irish grievance here, there is, with respect to teachers' pensions, a tenfold English grievance. The hon. Gentleman thought that the pensions ought to be larger than they are; but I would point out that although it might be possible to distribute the interest on the pension fund in a different way, the amount cannot be increased, in other words, if an alteration in the mode of distribution were to be made you would, by giving more to some, be taking away from others. And if you decline to recognise this necessity and insist on increasing the total amount given in pensions, this would only result in making the fund bankrupt, because you would disturb the actuarial calculation on which it is based. If you change the allocation you will simply be giving to A in the future what you are now giving to B; and I am not aware that there is any possible redistribution that can be suggested that will place the teachers in a better position than they are in at the present time. I think I have met the case of the hon. Gentleman fairly, and shown that although the Irish teacher is, in some respects, in a less advantageous position than his English brother, it is no fault of the Imperial Parliament. The Imperial Parliament does more for education in Ireland than in any other part of the United Kingdom, and if the Irish teacher is worse off than the English or Scotch teacher, it is because the Irish people contribute less to the cost of education.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.): I do not desire to prevent the Allotments Bill being reached at a reasonable hour, which I believe is desired by the Committee, and I shall therefore be as brief as possible in the observations I have to make on this Vote. In my opinion, not only is there ground for complaint that there is no pension fund established for the National School teachers in Ireland; but the whole education system as regards Ireland is at fault. The hon. Member for North Leitrim (Mr. Conway) has drawn attention to the fact that the education system in Ireland is not under local control. I point out that it is one which has been forced on the people by the Government, and they ought to accept the responsibility for it. The people of Ireland have no voice whatever in the appointment of the Commissioners, and although the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has stated that the Commissioners are a responsible body, inasmuch as they are appointed by the Executive, which holds its authority from this Government, yet, in my opinion, the Irish Representatives in this House have no voice in their appointment. Now, I was not prepared, even after the experience of this Session, to find that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would take up such an attitude of uncompromising hostility to the wishes of the Irish Members with regard to this question of the position of Irish National School teachers. The Predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman —the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach)—when this Vote was under consideration last year, said that there should be some modification of the entire system of national education in Ireland; and although, in the matter of the position of the National School teachers, no definite promise was made, yet he gave us distinctly to understand that amongst other matters the salaries of the National School teachers should be considered, and the right hon. Baronet even held out the promise that he would ask the Representatives of Ireland to co-operate with him in reforming the Irish educational system. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the present Chief Secretary for Ireland is so over-taxed that he cannot enter upon this very important work; but, however that may be, I sincerely trust the right hon. Gentleman will take some steps in the matter before long. I do not want to approach the question of national education in Ireland entirely from the point of view of the Irish National School teachers, although I believe their views are well worthy of consideration. But the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has made an attack upon the National School teachers—[Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, no!]—I speak of them as a class, not as individuals; and I want to draw attention to the status of the National School teachers in Ireland. When the right hon. Gentleman compared the working of the system in Ireland with the working of the system in England, he said that the teachers in England were very much better than those in Ireland; but I wish to point out that if that is so it is because their salaries are higher, and higher salaries attract a better class of men to the profession of teaching. The right hon. Gentleman made merry over the fact that my hon. Friend proposed to increase the salaries of the lower class teachers with the hope that they would become better; but cannot the right hon. Gentleman see that if higher salaries were offered that men of a higher class would be attracted to the profession, while the better class of men would remain in it instead of leaving it and going into the Civil Service, or to America; or even into the Constabulary, as some have done, rather than work on the present rate of pay? The scheme of education in Ireland may be described as a grand one. It has its Commissioners paid and unpaid; it has splendid offices, with a large staff of clerks, who are appointed from the favoured class, and a large number of Inspectors; but the people on whom the successful working of the system depends are underpaid. The system has always reminded me of the spectacle which would be presented by some fine carriage drawn by a set of starving horses. If it is a fact that the teachers are inadequate to the work of education that is required, I am prepared to maintain that the explanation is to be found in the words—"The teachers are underpaid." My hon. Friend has already pointed out the fact that in London teachers are paid on an average £135 per annum. My figures are £140, and I have taken them from very good authorities. The teachers in England receive on an average £120 a-year, while those in Ireland certainly do not receive more than £59 on an average. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland says that the whole of the salaries of the teachers in England depends upon results; but I wish to point out that it is not the teachers, but the managers of the schools who receive the result fees. The teachers have nothing to do with them; the manager pays the teacher a fixed salary, and the complaint in Ireland is that the teacher does not receive a fixed salary, but that a portion of his salary depends on results. Of course, you cannot institute a comparison between the two systems. In England you have a system belonging to the people; in Ireland you have a system belonging to the Government, and there can be no kind of comparison instituted between them. You have taken the matter of education in Ireland into your own hands. Now, with regard to the salaries which the National School teachers receive, Mr. Rowntree, the Inspector of National Schools in Sligo, writing in 1883, says that of 164 teachers in his district, there was only one who received £100 a-year; and of 123 principal teachers, 33 had between £70 and £100, and the remaining 90 between £30 and £70 a-year; 23 received £60, 39 £50, 30 £40, five £30, and three under £30. Notwithstanding this, the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland stated just now that the lowest class of teachers in Ireland received £50 a-year. Then we have the fact that 80 per cent of the teachers in Ireland are without houses. The right hon. Gentleman, upon this subject, was reminded by my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) that there was a difficulty in obtaining sites for both school rooms and for houses for schoolmasters in Ireland; but that is a fact that would be in the knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman if he knew much about the condition of the country. It is a matter of complaint all over the country that landlords will not grant sites for such purposes as schools and teachers' residences, and the complaint has more than once reached me from clergymen who are anxious to build school houses or houses for themselves that they cannot get the land necessary for that purpose from the landlords. Then, again, there is another matter which the right hon. Gentleman did not take into account, and that is that in England large numbers of resident gentry and manufacturing firms who contribute largely to the local schools——

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: When I spoke of the amount of contribution, I took every source of contribution within the State.

MR. NOLAN: But in Ireland we have not this resident gentry. The landlords, who draw large revenues out the country, prefer to leave their duties behind them, and dwell elsewhere; and who have not got those large manufacturing firms who in England contribute so largely to the local schools of the country. Now, as to the causes of low classification in Ireland. I do not intend to enter into that question. The teachers themselves have very clearly stated their case in a pamphlet, to which I would recommend the right hon. Gentleman to give his attention. I remember that during the course of his speech this evening he spoke of the small number of children to be educated in Ireland as compared with the number in England. Now, I think, if the right hon. Gentleman would look into this question, he would find that the averages are different; and in England it is possible—particularly under the present system of compulsory attendance—to secure a better average. The case is very different in Ireland where, during a certain part of the year the schools are almost deserted, because the children have to go from long distances, and in bad weather they cannot attend so regularly, and, again, in harvest and seed time they are engaged in the fields. The teachers in Ireland are therefore at this disadvantage, that while at certain times of the year they have a large number of children at the schools, at others the attendance is cut down and the average does not represent the number of children for whom they are responsible. The right hon. Gentleman has thrown the blame on the Local Authorities in Ireland, and, certainly it would appear that the Poor Law Authorities have not done their duty in this respect; but I point out that the Irish people are powerless in the matter of education. This is a Government system of education cut and dried. The Commissioners make the rules, draw up the programme, and select the books. Books cannot be used in the schools in Ireland as they can be used in this country at the will of the managers. Some time ago you might take up a whole set of books used in the Irish National Schools, read them right through, and not find the name of Ireland mentioned in them; and even now Irish history is not taught; and why? The Commissioners say it is because there is too much contentious matter in it, and I may draw attention to the fact, that the portion of history about which Irishmen have the best right to be heard, has nothing contentious about it at all. I am speaking of the period before the Danish Invasion. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman does not know that Ireland had a history so far back, but I beg to assure him that she had, and that standing monuments remain of the schools and institutions founded in the time of Charlemagne. The right hon. Gentleman has made a comparison of the state aid as between England and Ireland, but he never said one word about the immense sum given out of the Treasury for the police in Ireland, where both the educational and police systems are grossly mismanaged. My hon. Friend the Member for North Leitrim has drawn attention to the amount of money expended on the rent extracting machine—the police force. You spend upon this machine £1,000,000, while you seem to think it too much to spend £100,000 on the work of education—in other words force *ad libitum* is used to squeeze an impossible rent out of the Irish tenant, even if it is necessary to pull down his house or burn the roof over his head, while you begrudge the money for educating his children. Now, both constables and teachers are at your disposal in Ireland, but you limit the sphere of action of the latter in every way. I should like hon. Members opposite to consider for a moment the relative position of the members of the Constabulary Force to that of the National School teachers. A constable in Ireland receives from £60 to £70 a-year; teachers of the same grade receive from £30 to £40. Sergeants of police receive £70 to £80 a-year, while the teacher of the corresponding grade gets from £40 to £70. A head constable receives £90 to £140, while the head teachers in the National Schools receive from £70 to £100.

Then the members of the police force stand in a better position than the National School teacher, inasmuch as the police have barrack accommodation. The police pay a trifling amount for barracks, but it does not amount to as much as the teachers pay for houses. The police are provided with medical attendance; but whent the National School teacher is away through illness, he has to pay for a substitute as well as bear his own medical expenses. Let us look at the salaries from the point of view of the National School teachers, who have had hopes held out to them of improvement from year to year, even so far back as 1854, and in 1875 an Act of Parliament was passed which was intended to have an effect in the direction of improving the teachers' salaries, but which was found in operation to be a total failure. The object of the Act was to increase the salaries, but a portion of the amount was to be dependent on the Local Poor Law Unions, and it was found that out of 163 Unions only 21 contributed to the teachers' salaries, and as I have remarked, the Act became a failure. Then, again, in 1878 a Resolution was passed in this House, to the effect, that with reference to the position of the Irish National School teachers in Ireland, and the fact that the various means taken by Government had failed to satisfy the just demands of the Irish National School teachers, the House was of opinion that their present position called for immediate attention at the hands of Her Majesty's Government, with a view to the satisfactory adjustment of their claims. In 1879 there was an increase of £4 per head, but this concession was accompanied by a falling off of the contributions of the Guardians, so that, notwithstanding the increase in question, the National School teachers were reduced to the same position as they occupied in 1875. Then in 1883 a deputation waited on the then Chief Secretary for Ireland, consisting of Irish National School teachers, and to this deputation the Chief Secretary for Ireland said that he was so strongly impressed with the statements made by the deputation that he considered action ought to be taken by the Government in the matter, and, if possible, that it ought to be taken at once. He said, further, that he recognized the pledge which had been given by Parliament in 1875, and also recognized the fact that the measures taken by Government in redemption of that pledge have been only of a temporary character, and that he would be glad to introduce a measure on the subject at once. In 1884 a Bill was introduced by the Chief Secretary for Ireland to deal with this matter, but it was unfortunately dropped. We hear in foreign politics a great deal about continuity of policy, and I do not see why we should not hear more about it in connection with the Irish teachers. As to the few thousand pounds it would cost to put the system of education in Ireland on a satisfactory footing, I must say that I cannot see why Her Majesty's Government should shrink from it. If people are educated, they will be more easily dealt with. I know the progress of education within my own memory has had a wonderful effect upon the habits of the people. There may be some pauperism in the country, but I think that every right-minded man, whether Tory or Liberal, will agree, if he has any knowledge of the subject at all, that the people of Ireland are in a much more satisfactory condition now than they were in 25 years ago, and this is owing, in a great measure, to the work which has been done amongst them by the schools. Although the action of the schools is very important, much better results could have been obtained by putting them in a better state. Nothing, I believe, would contribute to helping the work on more than raising the status of the teachers. My hon. Friend the Member for North Leitrim (Mr. Conway) spoke of an intention on the part of the Government to dismiss the third-class teachers who have been for a long time at work in the schools. I hold that there should be no third-class teachers in the service, except for very elementary purposes, but at the same time it would scarcely be fair to throw overboard men who have been induced to enter the service, and who have discharged their duties to the best of their abilities for a number of years. But something must be done by the Government in the matter of refusing to sanction in the future the appointment of third-class teachers or men who are not likely to be suitable men for the work of education, and I hope that notwithstanding what the right hon. Gentleman has said on the subject, that he will reconsider his decision, and see if he cannot do something to improve the condition of affairs.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I do not mean to trouble the Committee with many remarks, but I should be sorry to allow the debate to close without saying something on the matter. The hon. Gentleman the Member for North Leitrim (Mr. Conway), who introduced the subject, did it very temperately, and many of the points upon which he has touched have been fairly treated by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary. So far as money goes, comparing England with Ireland, the Imperial Parliament gives really more in the case of Ireland than in that of England; but the real point in this question, to my mind, is this, the position of the National Schoolmasters as a means to an end, as a means of bringing up the youth of Ireland in a proper way, with right ideas, and with a due education. Now, Sir, I speak — putting aside the statistics— from personal knowledge. The view that I form is this—that the wisest thing any Government could possibly do is to look at this matter from the point of view that the National Schoolmasters constitute this means to an end. I think the Government should regard it in the light that in order to discharge our duty to the Irish people, it is a matter worthy of their most serious attention to deal with their position in such a way as to elevate and improve the masses. I think myself, Sir, that, under all the circumstances, putting aside the question whether we pay more or less to Irish schoolmasters than to English, I cannot help feeling that if I were an Irish schoolmaster I should be a discontented man. I do not think that it is a good thing for the State to have the schoolmasters, as a body, discontented men. The question must be looked at, not as one to be determined by statistics, but as one for statesmanlike inquiry and for grappling with the facts. I am sure that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, when he has a little more time to give to considerations of the future, will find that there is a great deal in the way of improving the population which can and ought to be done. I quite agree that though the State does give money for residences, still I know many districts where the money is valueless, because there is no possibility of obtaining sites. The real difficulty is not so much a landlords' difficulty. The fact is that landlords let their lands to tenants, and, as a general rule, I believe, that by giving up part of their land—or, rather, taking it from tenants for the purpose of offering a school site—brings about consequences which it is desirable to avoid. I think, therefore, that when this question is fairly approached, it will be seen that there is room for improvement in the law by which the landlord shall be relieved from his difficulties, and may be able to give sites for school residences where they are wanted. And there is another thing to be considered, even if there were no objection on the part of the landlords, and that is one of the difficulties before us in facilitating education. It largely proceeds from the fact that it is found that the nature of the education given does not tend to advance the agricultural interests of the country. It is found that the present system of education turns out a large number of inferior clerks, who are utterly unfit to obtain their living by agriculture. I would ask the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to this point—the character of the education given. There is a point which is hardly ever alluded to on these Benches, or by the National Leaders in Ireland, and it is with regard to the National Schoolmasters. I touched upon it last year, and I promised the House that I will touch upon it on every possible occasion, in the hope of getting the evil of which I complain remedied. It has been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that the schoolmaster in this country is a local servant, but that in Ireland he is a State servant. The State pays the schoolmaster, but they are the only servants of the State in the whole length and breadth of the Empire whose tenure of office depends upon the will of private individuals. Though nominally the servant of the State—the manager—that is, a landlord's agent—the parsons and the priests may discharge the schoolmaster at three months' notice on the merest caprice; and these State-paid servants may not only lose their position under the State and their present means of living, but also the prospective advantages of pensions which the State offers. Well, now, to rectify this state of things would not require any addition to the Estimates. It is a grievance capable of being remedied—a grievance which is working a great deal more ill in Ireland than those who have not a clear knowledge of it suppose. I do entreat the right hon. Gentleman, when he gets time at his disposal, which I hope he soon may —because I trust that we shall soon see the peace and settlement of Ireland—that he will look into this question of the grievances of the schoolmasters, and I trust that, above all, remembering that they are State servants, he will secure them from capricious dismissal by private individuals.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. and gallant Gentleman speaks upon this subject with great knowledge; but his speech indicates what I am sure he himself is alive to—namely, the great difficulty that is inherent in the question, do what the Government may, and do what Parliament may. He has stated very fairly that the Irish school teachers are, to a certain extent, a discontented body, owing to the smallness of their salaries; and I think the hon. and gallant Member will feel just as much as I feel that for the State on that account to step in and add to their salaries without asking them to do anything for the increase made, may be, to a certain extent, good for the teachers, but it certainly would not be good for the cause of education, which I think does require effort on the part of localities corresponding with the effort of the State, for its healthy development. The second point my hon. and gallant Friend started was this—he said that while the State pays the teacher, somebody else appoints him, and somebody else dismisses him. My hon. and gallant Friend has not exaggerated the peculiarity of the Irish educational system. He has exactly described the system, which is a most extraordinary one; but he knows, as well as I do, that to attempt to take out of the control of the priests of the country—for that is what it comes to practically — the management of the education of the country, would be to throw the whole Catholic hierarchy into direct and violent antagonism to the whole system. I do not hesitate to say that I have always been anxious, in those parts of Ireland where the Roman Catholic religion predominates, to act, as far as I can, in the direction of favouring an educational system in accordance with the prevailing feeling and sentiment of the locality, and any alteration, such as that my hon. and gallant Friend proposes, which would bring into antagonism with the system of education the whole Catholic hierarchy, would alone be enough to blast the most perfect system which could exist on paper. I only make these few remarks in order to show my hon. and gallant Friend that I am alive to the evils he points out, and that I recognize with him that there are evils, and that I am also alive to the difficulties which beset not only this Government, but I am afraid any Government for a long time which attempts to deal in a comprehensive and liberal spirit with the Irish educational system.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.): The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, in reply to the hon. Member for North Leitrim (Mr. Conway), will be received with great disappointment by the school teachers of Ireland, as, during the early part of the Session, the late Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Holmes), in reply to a Question of mine, held out every hope that the case of the teachers would receive attention. Early in the Session I called attention to the position of the teachers, and the right hon. and learned Gentleman, in reply, stated that the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) was engaged at the time he was stricken down with illness—an illness which we all very much regret—in dealing with this question. He said—

> "I can assure hon. Members that my right hon. Friend has been working assiduously for some time on several matters in fulfilment of his promise to attend to this subject."

And he went on to say—and this is the point to which I would more particularly direct attention—

> "He has left the result of his work for his successor, and I am certain there will be no default in this matter on the part of my right hon. Friend (Mr. A. J. Balfour.)"—(3 *Hansard*, [311] 1443.)

I want to know how far the right hon. Baronet the Member for West Bristol had proceeded with the scheme which he intended for the benefit of the National teachers? From the speech of the then Attorney-General for Ireland, the right hon. Baronet was evidently at work upon it, and in view of that I must say that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to-night will be received with great disappointment by those persons who have been so long promised relief. In 1879 a Resolution was passed declaring that the salaries of the teachers in Ireland was altogether inadequate, and that the teachers required relief. That relief has never come, though, from that time to this, successive Governments have promised relief, particularly the Tory Government, and particularly the right hon. Baronet the Member for West Bristol. I very much regret that right hon. Gentleman's absence from this House, because I believe that if he had been in Office since last March the case of the National teachers would not have remained undealt with.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, in the course of his speech, led the Committee to believe that the money to be voted towards the increase of the salaries of the National teachers in recent years was all derived from Imperial funds. I think, if I may be permitted to say so, and if the phrase is not un-Parliamentary, that that is altogether disingenuous. The right hon. Gentleman must know that all the recent increases in salaries, whether to National teachers or anyone else in Ireland, have come out of the Irish Church Surplus Fund—a purely Irish fund. This has been the case with regard to all the grants from this Parliament made for the promotion of intermediate or higher education, or for the relief of distress or for advances to the landlords. I deny that the Government are entitled to take credit for having been generous to the Irish people in the matter of any of these grants during the past 15 years. All these grants, I repeat, have been taken out of the Irish Church Fund, which has been a sort of milch cow for Ministers, on whichever side of the House they sat, whether on that side or on this. The right hon. Gentleman says that the demand made to-night for increased salaries to the Irish National School teachers would, if granted, be hard upon the English taxpayers. Undoubtedly, it is hard upon the English taxpayer; but that is the fault of your system of government. Every branch of Irish Administration, under the present system, is supported in an extravagant manner, because you are upholding a system of government in Ireland which is incapable of reasonable maintenance. You are supporting a system of government which is entirely corrupt and corrupting, and the consequence is that you are obliged to spend an amount of money which no purely Irish Administration would dream of spending. When England objects to spend more money on Irish education, our answer is—"Will you give up the control of Irish education, if we, the Irish people, pay the money?" Will the right hon. Gentleman consent to give us the appointment of the Commissioners in Dublin, and to hand over to us the framing of the rules and the management of our whole system of education? If he will do that, we shall be perfectly content to pay the cost. If he will not do that, what right has he to complain of the demands made by us? The ratepayers in Ireland have refused to avail themselves of the power to become contributory to the support of the National teachers. They have done so deliberately, and, for my own part, I think they have done right, because they were refused all share in the management of the schools; and so long as the British Parliament refuses to the people of Ireland the control of their own education —a thing which every people ought to possess—I hope the people of Ireland will persit in this attitude. The right hon. Gentleman founded an argument for not giving an increase of salary to the teachers in Ireland on the fact that very few of them, or a comparatively small proportion of them, are trained. Now, this is really too bad altogether. After having for years resisted the demands of the Representatives of the Irish people, in and out of this House, for denominational training schools — the only training schools which the Irish people would be content to accept—and having by that refusal denied an opportunity for the training of teachers in Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman now comes forward and bases upon the result an argument against us. I must say I never heard in the form of argument anything so preposterous or anything more audacious, if I may be allowed to say so. In the first place, he denies us that system of education which the Irish people would accept, and then, discovering the bad result of the denial, he charges it upon us and makes it an argument against us. Everything like that, it seems to me, comes with a very bad grace from any supporter—I do not care who he is, whether Liberal or Conservative—of the present system of education in Ireland. The hon. and gallant Gentleman who has just left the House (Captain Colomb) complimented my hon. Friend the Member for North Leitrim on the manner in which he had introduced this question to the House. The House will admit, I think, that my hon. Friend introduced the subject in a very temperate fashion; but what thanks has he got for so doing? Why, he has been treated just the same as if he were one of the most reckless talkers in this House. The fact of the matter is, that the result is precisely the same whether you advocate the demands of Ireland in a temperate fashion or in an intemperate fashion. Let the National teachers hear and note to-morrow that never has there been a man who occupied the post of Chief Secretary for Ireland who returned a more emphatic negative to every one of their demands than the right hon. Gentleman who now occupies that position. The right hon. Gentleman will probably, before he leaves Office, discover the fatal results of outraging the feelings of the National teachers of Ireland, for those National School teachers will now be informed that they have nothing to hope for from the present Government, a discovery which will be particularly disappointing to them, when they recollect that within the last six months the Government has made to this House the pledges it has now violated; and I sincerely hope that the National teachers will exercise the power they have of marking in an emphatic manner the resentment they must feel at such treatment. Sir, I rose for a very different purpose than to dwell on these matters, and it was to draw the attention of the House to a point to which I attracted attention last year, with regard to the Training Colleges. On that occasion I pointed out several advantages which the State Colleges in Ireland possessed over the denominational Training Colleges which have recently been permitted to be erected. I will not trouble the Committee with stating the case over again; but on that occasion, after I had made my statement, the then Chief Secretary for Ireland said that he could promise hon. Members that the subject would receive his consideration. At the time I knew the value of a promise like that; of course, I knew that it meant simply nothing at all. Vague promises of that description in the mouth of a Chief Secretary for Ireland never do mean anything at all. However, we should like to know from the present Chief Secretary whether anything has been done, or whether any consideration has been given to the question? We should like to know whether anything has been done to level up or to level down in respect of these denominational Training Colleges, and the State Training College in Marlborough Street? At present some most irritating and objectionable differences exist; and, so far as I have been able to make out, nothing has been done during the past 12 months to remove those differences. I should like to know whether anything has been done, and, if not, whether it is intended to do anything, to put the denominational Training Colleges on the same footing as the State Training College in Marlborough Street?

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I had hoped that when the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland left the hot field of political discussion and turned his attention away from such questions as Resident Magistrates, that he would have met us in a different manner to that in which he has met us. I had thought that when we got to the question of these teachers, to whom, he admits, in past years our Governments have shown the cold shoulder, and whom he admits to have been very badly treated, that he would deal with the question in a conciliatory and sympathetic spirit. Instead of that, I think we have got from him less satisfaction on this matter than we have received from any of his Predecessors. The right hon. Gentleman has been a constant attendant in this House for years, and he, no doubt, has watched the course of former Administrations with regard to Irish affairs. I think he will admit that the right hon. Baronet the Member for West Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) always spoke sympathetically of the Irish teachers, and always expressed a desire to do something for them. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow (Sir George Trevelyan), when Chief Secretary, also spoke sympathetically of this class, and, on the question of sites for school residences, promised to do something. Well, there is no question as to the obtaining of these sites now before the Committee; but the right hon. Gentleman has admitted that the case of the teachers deserves investigation, though he has treated them with extreme coldness, and held out no hope of ameliorating their condition. He has given us a number of arguments which, when examined, become of extremely small value. The hon. Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) has pointed out that the complaint of the right hon. Gentleman that the schoolmasters have not got training is entirely unfounded. What did the right hon. Gentleman say to the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Bow Division of the Tower Hamlets (Captain Colomb)? Why, he said as to doing away with the power of the school managers to dismiss the teachers, that to take this power away would be to set the whole Catholic hierarchy of Ireland against the system of education. I agree with him in that; but he does not say the same with regard to the Training Colleges—that is to say, he does not attach the same importance to the opinion of the Catholic hierarchy on that subject. He knows very well that they set their face against these undenominational Training Colleges, and that in consequence of that the Colleges have been modified within the last few years. Up to the last few years teachers could not go to the Training Colleges without fighting with their ministers and the whole hierarchy of Ireland. I think the hierarchy were right, because they would never have been able to protect denominational education if they had not set their faces against these training schools. Whatever happened was not the fault of the teachers; but the responsibility, such as it was, rested with the Government, who would not allow the model schools to have denominational teaching. The statistics are drawn up in different forms. I think the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will admit that in England the average amount paid to school teachers, including assistants, is £120 a-year, and that in many cases there are residences provided. But in Ireland the school teacher gets on the average, if we throw in the assistants, about £65 a-year. That is an enormous discrepancy, because there is no difference in the cost of living. Perhaps eggs and butter are a little cheaper in Ireland than in England, but everything else is quite as dear; clothes, and perhaps tea, are a little dearer in Ireland. The statistics on which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary chiefly dwelt were somewhat fallacious. He pointed out that the first-class teachers got £101 a-year. I am not sure he included the whole of the first class, because there are two divisions; but if even he included the whole class they form only 13 per cent of the whole of the teachers of Ireland, and out of this number there are many female teachers. There are only 7 or 8 per cent male teachers who belong to the first class. The average salary of a male teacher in England is £120 a-year; there are many who only get £40, £50, £60, or £70—in fact, the great bulk get under £60. Hon. Gentlemen must see that it is the worst possible policy that they can adopt to have 10,000 teachers throughout Ireland who are thoroughly discontented. These teachers are entrusted with the education of the future generation, and yet you do not pay them sufficient to keep them contented. They would be content, I think, if their remuneration were a little lower than that of the teachers of England. The present discrepancy is much too great, and when they see this enormous discrepancy in their position they are, of course, naturally discontented, and I, personally, wonder they are not more so. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary rather denied that the Estimate for England has increased much faster than that for Ireland. As a matter of fact, the English Education Estimate has increased very rapidly indeed. In 1874 the sum voted for education in England was £1,500,000, and now it is upwards of £3,000,000; although there has been an increase in the grant to Ireland, there has been no such increase as that. You have been rapidly increasing the Estimate for England, but you have made no corresponding increase to that for Ireland. I do not wish to go at length into the question of administration, though the cost of your administration is much more expensive in Ireland than it is in England in proportion to the population. Our case is that we want a considerable share of the money we subscribe to the Imperial Revenue for education; instead of which you say—"Oh, no; the first mortgage must be for the Army and the Constabulary." The money spent on the Military Forces in Ireland is about £4,200,000; there is no country in Europe—no military country—which pays the same percentage for an armed force as Ireland. I say, spend a little less on the armed force and a little more on education; £100,000 to the National School teachers would be an enormous boon, and would go far indeed to lessen the necessity for a gigantic armed force in the country—gigantic in proportion to the Revenue of the country. What we say is, redistribute the Revenue, and let the first object of your redistribution be an increase of the Irish teachers' salaries, so that they may live decently. I think there is one reason why Ireland, if she were allowed to manage these things for herself, would expect to pay more to the teachers per head of the population, and it is this—England is only twice as big in area as Ireland, but it has got five times its population; secondly, the population of England is more concentrated, and it is easier to collect the children in the schools. I think that if you wish to give equal education in the two countries, you cannot do it as cheaply in Ireland, where the population is scattered, as you can in England, where the population is concentrated, and where there are greater facilities for the teaching of children. Now, upon the question of sites for residences, I must say the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary has not inquired into that subject sufficiently. A great many landlords will not give sites for teachers' residences, or they will raise such difficulties as are tantamount to a refusal. They will not sell the land—that is out of the question, and I do not altogether blame them for that; but some of them will refuse to lease land—at any rate, land in a proper situation. I know that in my own neighbourhood certainly one or two landlords either refuse to lease land for such purposes, or, while not actually refusing, they throw almost insuperable difficulties in the way. I will not bring the charge against Irish landlords that as a general rule they refuse sites—they do not; but still the question is humiliating. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary ought to look to this point and see that more residences are built. There are now 71 per cent of the teachers in Ireland without residences, while the proportion in England without residences is very much smaller indeed. I have not seen the figures this year, but I have seen the figures for several years in which the number of free residences in England was enormously greater than that in Ireland. There is only one other point I have to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to. The hon. and gallant Member for the Bow Division of the Tower Hamlets (Captain Colomb) suggested to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that he should take over the teachers as State servants, and take out of the hands of managers the power of dismissing teachers; but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary saw what a political flood he would bring upon himself if he attempted to grapple with such a question. The whole educational history of Ireland for the last 40 years has been a constant struggle between proselytizing on the one hand and the denominational system on the other. At the present time the system is partly denominational, protected by a Conscience Clause. If you once interfere with the power of managers you open the whole question, and must settle at once whether you are to have Protestant schools for Catholics, or whether you are to have mixed schools, or schools without any religion at all, which the people will never stand in Ireland. At present there is a fairly satisfactory working compromise arrived at in that respect. I do not think the hon. and gallant Gentleman is very correct when he says that the school teachers are practically discharged by priests. Now, as to the question of the taking over of local schools by Poor Law Unions, I must say, being personally acquainted as I am with the working of the Poor Law system in Ireland at present, that the Unions do not particularly want to take over the schools. There is no other properly constituted Body in Ireland except the Poor Law Boards; but I do not consider they are very well suited for managing schools. It is perfectly clear that if the Poor Law Guardians do not want to take over the schools, they are not very likely to grant the teachers any increase of salary. In the whole of Connaught there is not one contributory Union. You have already put enormous burdens on the Unions for the registration of voters and half-a-dozen other things, and to ask them to assume a new burden in addition would be very unfair, and would be, in my opinion, the height of folly. I do not see myself that the teachers are very likely at present to get any great increase of salary unless it comes through the Government, and I think we have a strong claim on the Government simply because we pay such a large revenue to the Imperial Exchequer, and that very little is spent in Ireland that is of any good to the country. Either the State will have to pay more towards the salaries of the National School teachers of Ireland, or they must be left in their present wretched and discontented position. I think that if you want to make the country contented the very first thing you should do is to put the teachers of the young in a decent position. You have always been told this by your own Irish supporters, and I think it is one of the most beneficial uses to which you could put the Irish Revenue.

MR. CLANCY: Will the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary take up the question I put to him some time ago, and to which he has paid no attention—namely, the question of the Training Colleges?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan), I have to say that his observations about sites I am perfectly ready to meet. But I hope that he, on his part, will feel that a great portion of the difficulties which actually exist in Ireland with reference to the provision of sites for residences of school teachers rests with the slackness of the school managers. If he, on his part, will recognize that difficulty I will see what I can do.

COLONEL NOLAN: No, no!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid that is so. The terms given by the Treasury are undoubtedly very good, and it is impossible to admit that the non-provision arises from the fact that the landlords will not give land for sites.

COLONEL NOLAN: Very largely.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If landlords there be who are unwilling to give sites, and the hon. and gallant Gentleman will do all he can to stir up the school managers to take advantage of the enormous pecuniary privileges granted by Parliament, we will do all we can to obtain sites for residences. I do not think the hon. and gallant Gentleman will himself deny that the terms offered by the Treasury are generous.

COLONEL NOLAN: They are not very bad.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Now, I have been very unfortunate in the remarks I have made to the Committee if I have led any hon. Gentleman to suppose that I regard the present state of education in Ireland as perfectly satisfactory, or that it is at the present moment so stereotyped a system and so perfect in itself that I am not prepared to do anything I can to improve it. That is not my belief. All I attempted to show in my previous speech was that at all events if there be grievances as regards the payment of salaries a still greater difficulty exists in England with regard to the payment by the Exchequer of contributions to the salaries of English teachers. I admit that the system of education in Ireland is not one which meets with universal acceptance. I think that fact can never be absent from the minds of the Executive, and I shall certainly continue to give my best attention to the subject and do what I can to improve the system, especially with regard to the subject of Training Colleges. I am quite aware that the existing system of Training Colleges does not give perfect satisfaction, because it is alleged—and alleged with perfect truth—that the undenominational Colleges have special advantages over the denominational Colleges. It is true, and I admit that it is a subject which deserves consideration. But it is also true that the denominational Colleges in Ireland, if they have less favourable terms as regards contributions from the Exchequer than undenominational Colleges, they have as favourable terms as denominational Training Colleges in England and Scotland. The denominational Training Colleges in Dublin have 75 per cent of the cost paid by the Imperial Exchequer, and that is all that is paid towards denominational Colleges in England. Therefore, as compared with the Colleges in England the Irish denominational Colleges have nothing to complain of. I perfectly admit that the inequality at present existing between denominational Training Colleges and undenominational Training Colleges in Dublin is a question which has engaged the attention of my Predecessor in Office, and which shall engage my attention; but it is a part of the larger question of Irish education—a very large question if you include in it not merely primary education, but also University education. The subject is one which shall receive my most careful attention. I have no scheme to propose to the House, but I promise hon. Members that I will not fail during the Recess to consider the question in all its bearings.

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I wish to call the attention of the Committee to the Vote for Irish Agricultural and Dairy Schools, because I think the farmers of England should know what is being done by the State for agricultural education in Ireland. I gave notice some time ago to move to reduce the Vote of £3,968 by £200, under the impression that I could thereby endeavour to secure that the £200, if deducted, should be given to the Cheshire Dairy Institute; but I found that that was irregular, and therefore I can merely say that I feel strongly that if grants are given by Parliament to Irish dairy schools they should also be given to English ones. The policy which has been pursued towards these schools in Ireland is remarkable, and a great deal of money has been spent on them, more, perhaps, than is justifiable, and I doubt whether at the present time the country get full value for the money, and whether the schools are fully appreciated. The most important and the earliest is the Glasnevin Training School and Farm, which was started in 1838, and which is described as follows by Sir Patrick Keenan in 1883 in a letter to the Lord Lieutenant—

"The Glasnevin Farm was not designed merely to bring up a race of skilled stewards and practical farmers. Its original and primary purpose, on the contrary, was simply to qualify the ordinary elementary schoolmasters to instruct their pupils in the theory of agricultural science; and, where practicable in school gardens and small farms attached to the national schools, to illustrate their teaching by reference to the operations on gardens and farms."

There are also farmers trained at it; but the main object is thus seen to be a Training College to give ordinary school teachers some knowledge of agriculture. About 1850 to 1856 there was a further development of these schools. Parliament spent no less than £115,000 in starting 20 school farms and erecting farm buildings and residences; in the years 1853-4 the Vote for such purposes being £15,500. This policy was not continued, and nearly all these farms, with their costly buildings, were handed back to the landlords owing to the hostility of succeeding Irish Governments. One branch of the education still remains, however, in full operation, for every rural National School is obliged to teach the fundamental principles of agricultural science to the children in the 4th, 5th, and 6th Standards. I find that last year 74,000 children have thus been taught and examined, and of these 45,700 have passed. Now, what is called a result fee is, I understand, given for each child who passes; and, so far as I can learn, this result fee or grant is about 4*s*. If so, then a grant of about £9,000 is paid for agricultural teaching, in addition to the sum of nearly £4,000 we are now asked to vote. I think the British farmer should know of this, and should know how the money is spent, especially when no such money is voted for England. There is, however, another class of school of which I very much approve, and I should like to see them copied in England A certain number of ordinary rural National Schools have attached to them small farms or gardens in which the children are taught how to work; and "result fees" or grants are paid for passes in them according, first, to the degree of merit which the cultivation of the little farm or garden evince; and, second, according to the practical powers of the pupils as agents in the working of the farms. Now, good as these are, I fear they are not thriving in Ireland, because in 1881 there were 93 of them, and this year we are only asked to vote money for 70. I regret this diminution, but this, along with other signs, makes me fear either that the money is not properly spent, or that the schools are not appreciated. There are four heads for this Vote. Superintendence takes £650, all of which goes to one man, and I think it is too much. The Glasnevin School gets £3,061, merely, or at any rate chiefly, as a Training College, and I want to know whether the Government really think that money well spent. The Albert Model Farm is the most satisfactory, for, though its expenses are £2,840, it makes an income of £3,333. The Munster Dairy School and the 70 small farm schools get£2,500; but there are receipts from fees in the various schools of £500, and the Munster School makes £1,250. Thus the total grant required is £3,968. When I come to examine the Appropriation Accounts, however, I find that none of these schools have had as many pupils as were expected, and therefore have not spent the whole of the grant. Glasnevin has saved £576, owing to vacancies in several classes, and consequent saving in provisions; for the same reason the Munster School has saved £209 and the other schools £284, whilst at the Albert Farms £168 less was received in fees than was estimated. I consider these facts unsatisfactory, and they justify me in asking whether the country is getting value for its money. I am strongly in favour of grants for technical schools where it is proved they are well used, and I urge the Government to make some declaration that they will treat England in the same way as Ireland in the matter. In the meantime, I think public attention should be called to these grants, because I am sure that very few persons in England—and even very few hon. Members of this House—know that they exist, and I want some explanation from the Government as to the results that are obtained in Ireland.

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet): I am perfectly satisfied that only a very few words of explanation will be necessary to satisfy the English people with the Vote as it stands upon the Paper. I am sure that the English public wish to give every facility to Irish industries, and especially to the agricultural industry. The hon. Gentleman opposite the Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren), to my intense surprise, has, for the first time in this House, practically made a Motion to reduce the wretched pittance given for the improvement of Irish agriculture. I do think that, for once in my life, I shall receive the support of the Irish Members below the Gangway in resisting that proposal. [*Cheers.*] The hon. Gentleman has given us figures, but figures are not of much use when in ignorance of the facts. The hon. Gentleman really knows nothing of the subject. These schools have done a great deal of good in Ireland, and have turned out a very useful class of men with a fair knowledge of agriculture, and very great service has thus been done, not only in Munster, but elsewhere. I can speak of people who have been trained in the Munster schools who, from their thorough knowledge and tenderness of habit in making their butter——

DR. TANNER: Dairy-maids?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Yes; dairy-maids. They have acquired a thorough knowledge themselves, and they have been able to impart it to the wives and daughters of the small farmers all round. I do not think I shall be asked at this hour of the night to go into particulars on this point. It would take a very long time to do that, but I am quite sure the House will believe me when I say that in this one particular I do not think the House will grudge to help the Irish farmers to the knowledge and use of those things which alone can bring them to prosperity. I cannot believe that any English Member, and I am sure the hon. Member himself (Mr. M'Laren), when he thinks over it, will be the last to press the idea that a very small sum paid for teaching ought to be got rid of because he may not find the system of teaching pursued quite what he expected to find it. I cannot allow this occasion to pass without expressing my deep regret for the lamented death of Professor Baldwin, who has done so much good in the school at Glasnevin.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I wish to say only one word, for, as an English Member and a friend of education, desiring to see the advancement and progress of technical education, I cannot avoid expressing my extreme regret at the language which has been used by the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren). He seems to have an objection to the extent of this Vote, and he says the English people ought to know the manner in which the money is being spent. I wish, Sir, that the English people did know more of the manner in which the money is spent, because they would then see that a fair attempt, at any rate, has been made to do justice to Ireland in one respect. I myself have devoted attention to this matter for many years, and it has been to me a matter of great regret that the attempt to improve technical education in Ireland, as regards agriculture, has not been more successful. But although I do feel that regret, I congratulate successive Governments on the efforts they have made; and although the success has not been complete, still the desire to attain success has been the characteristic of successive Governments. As regards the comparison between the advantages given to English agriculture and the advantages given to Irish agriculture, at any rate in this particular the Irish have a preference over the English. I desire to see technical education extending in Ireland, for I feel that technical education in Ireland is far more important than political agitation in that country; and, holding that view most firmly, I rejoice to see that in this one branch of education—technical education for the greatest industry of the Irish people—namely, agriculture—some small beginning has been made. I extremely regret that any word should have fallen from any Member of this House expressing any sort of grudging spirit against this Vote. I hope the Vote will largely increase, and that these schools will become increasingly useful; and I believe, instead of technical education being confined to agriculture in Ireland, it should be extended over various other fields. In that case the genius of the Irish people will find new spheres of development, and as their industries increase there will be an enlargement of Irish wealth — there will be more labour, more toil, and a corresponding growth of wealth and happiness.

Mr. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): I must protest as strongly as I can against the speech which my hon. Friend the Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren) recently made with regard to this Vote. The hon. Gentleman has got it into his head that under this Vote there is something like a scandal concealed, and he has assumed the extraordinary attitude that because Englishmen do not see fit to vote away a sum of money every year for technical education in agriculture in their own country, therefore Irishmen should be deprived of this very small sum that is annually voted. There is not a sum in the whole of the Irish Estimates which is turned to better account than this. There is not a sum of money which, for its amount, does so much good as this very small sum, and all I regret is that this sum, instead of being £4,000 a-year, is not nearer £400,000 a-year for the general support of agriculture. I may seem to exaggerate; but it would cost the people of Ireland fully that sum each year to teach agriculture properly and insure agricultural improvement and development. It is all very well to say that agricultural education in England is totally independent of the State. That is because the people engaged in it are able to afford to take the money from their own pockets, and to instruct each other fairly well. If you turn to Continental countries you will find that, in proportion to the Revenue, the amount of money spent in this way in such countries as Switzerland and France is much more than the sum of £400,000 would be in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman (Mr. M'Laren) has made some reference to what happened before the Select Committee on Butter Substitutes which sat upstairs, and he suggested that the evidence did not intend to show that the Cork School—the Munster Dairy Farm—was giving value for the money spent upon it. I think there is no evidence directly from that body on the point. Still, the evidence that did come before the Committee tended to show that the amount of value given by that institution was fully in proportion to the amount of money spent on it. I will not go into the evidence; but it showed, to my mind, that the people educated in the school were able to show people in Cheshire, who are supposed to have great skill in dairy pursuits, their business in some respects. Under these circumstances, the people of the Munster Dairy Schools cannot be said to have failed altogether. Reference has been made to the Glasnevin School, and I am sure that every Irishman who takes an interest in the material progress of the people of Ireland will thank the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland

(Colonel King-Harman) for expressing regret at the somewhat premature death of Professor Baldwin, who has been of enormous service to the general body of persons interested in agricultural education. The success achieved by the Glasnevin Farm is entirely due to the efforts and to the enthusiasm of Professor Baldwin, extending over a long series of years, as head of the school. Sir, I regret very much that this sum, instead of being so small, is not very much larger, and I trust that the Government of which the right hon. and gallant Gentleman is a Member will, during their term of Office, try to take steps not in the direction indicated by the hon. Member for the Crewe Division but quite the contrary, and see if they cannot increase the number of these schools on the model of the Albert Farm. The hon. Gentleman has pointed out that some of these schools were built at considerable cost, and have fallen into disuse and become the property of the landlords. I lament that that should be the case; but I believe that if the Government made the attempt they would carry these model schools through in spite of all opposition, and the people would be glad to take advantage of them. They are sorry that advantage was not taken of them before, and I am sure they would not let them fall into disuse again.

CAPTAIN COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral): I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Tyrone (Mr. M. J. Kenny). At the present moment, the teacher who teaches us butter-making in the Cheshire Dairy School is a pupil of the Munster Dairy School, and we owe our gratitude to that institution for sending us such a teacher. I am quite sure the hon. Member for the Crewe Division of Cheshire (Mr. M'Laren) did not entirely intend what he said. I am sure that all he meant or intended to convey was that as the Munster Dairy School, and agricultural education in Ireland generally, was encouraged by the State, so similar institutions should be encouraged in England — that there should be State aid given to similar schools and dairy institutions in this country. I know that is what the hon. Gentleman meant, and I am sure that is what he intended to convey.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): We have had again a blast and counter-blast regarding all the advantages extending to the country to which I have the honour to belong which it is said are not granted to England. That is all very well. Why not grant them to England, then? At the same time we have had the counter-blast of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Parliamentary Under Secretary for Ireland (Colonel King-Harman), which was just merely an expression of that cheap sympathy which we can relish and judge properly in Ireland over the Munster Model Farm. It is very easy to pump up any of these cheap expressions of sympathy which are given to the people of Ireland. What is the total amount of this grant? Why, the total amount of the grant for agricultural establishments this year is £9,051, as against last year's Vote of £9,436. But these people lose sight of the fact that these agricultural schools are made to be self-supporting to a great extent, and there is a set-off of £5,083 this year as against £5,485 last year. So that the total amount of this Vote which we have this wonderful amount of talk about is only £3,968 this year as against £3,951 last year. It is simply absurd that so much valuable time should be wasted over such a question.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: Hear, hear!

DR. TANNER: "Hear, hear!" says the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. He got up to fire a shot on behalf of his beloved Munster Dairy Farm—his dairy of dairy-maids—because it does not produce anything else. Now, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman and his friend Colonel Shoulden——

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I beg pardon. I never heard of him in my life.

DR. TANNER: Well, he belongs, at all events, to two of the same Clubs as the right hon. and gallant Gentleman. They have been praising up this Munster Model Farm.

Several Irish MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

DR. TANNER: Some of my hon. Friends may say "Hear, hear!" but what I maintain is that this Munster Model Farm is not doing the good it really ought to do; and when I ask myself why it is not doing so much good, I can tell you the reason—it is because it does not command the confidence of the people. It is in the hands of a lot of "shoneens" in the South of Ireland, whom the people have no confidence in. They send us out invitations to take luncheon, prepared by the pupils; they send out these invitations twice a-year to go and inspect their dairymaids. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Quite so. It is to go and inspect the school; but the school produces nothing but dairy-maids. I maintain that, and I say that this school does not command the confidence of the people in the South of Ireland; and if you want to make it a really good school you should have people placed on the management who are known to the people and to the friends of the people; and you should take away those who are now connected with the management of this Munster Model Farm, for I can assure you that none of them are at all popular in the South of Ireland. If you want to make this a good and going concern in the South of Ireland, where you have a large district to deal with, let it command the confidence of the people; and to do that you must put proper people on the management, instead of having it, as it is necessarily at present, under "shoneen" people. Put people who are more popular upon the management, and then you may do something with it.

MR. CONWAY: I should like to say a few words on the main Vote. In consequence of the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, I would venture to propose the reduction of the Vote by a certain sum, but that I am restrained by my hon. Friends. I am alone in this House in withstanding the attitude, and manner, and eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman. I regret that my fears were realized in the answer he gave on behalf of the teachers. He attempted a rhetorical diversion, and put forward a certain percentage of teachers who received £101 a-year on the average, and bolstered up his case by leaving out in the cold those below. He held out no hopes to those teachers when he was shown the distinction exhibited in the character of the pay of the English and Scotch masters—he held out no helping hand to these men; but he threw ridicule upon them. With regard to the sites, he ought to make the sites for residence compulsory. I do not think there has been any answer to this.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I distinctly said that I would consider the question.

MR. CONWAY: Well, our hopes are not realized, and I am afraid that they will not be realized. The Irish masters say that when they do get residences they have to pay these instalments for 35 years. They begin their labours at 18 years of age, and have to work up to 65, and at 65 they leave the premises. The payments should be extended over a longer period than 35 years, so that one individual should not pay the cost of the whole tenement. The right hon. Gentleman did not go into the question of the pensions which the services of the masters ought to get, so that I should be warranted in moving the reduction of the Vote, because these masters produce results that ought to be paid for. He held out no hope to the masters at all. But I simply enter a protest on this occasion, though next year I shall move certain reductions in the Vote.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): My hon. Friends are not unwilling that the Government should take the remaining Votes in this Class, on condition that the postponed Resolution may be further postponed till to-morrow, in order that we may now proceed with the Allotments Bill.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): Does the hon. Gentleman mean that we should take all but the Supplementaries?

MR. SEXTON: No; all the Irish Votes.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): All the Irish Votes should be taken; but the consideration of the postponed Resolution shall not be taken to-night.

MR. SEXTON: I referred to Class IV.

MR. W. H. SMITH: There is nothing else of any importance. We must get all the Irish Votes this evening.

MR. M. J. KENNY (Tyrone, Mid): Does the right hon. Gentleman mean the Supplementary Irish Votes?

MR. W. H. SMITH: The understanding is that all the regular Irish Estimates will be taken this evening; but that consideration of the Report of Supply is to be postponed.

(3.) £1,115, to complete the sum for the Teachers' Pension Office, Ireland.

(4.) £420, to complete the sum for the Endowed Schools Commissioners, Ireland.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland say when the Report of the Endowed Schools Commission will be received?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I think the hon. Gentleman rather makes a mistake. There is a considerable difference between the temporary Endowed Schools Commission and the permanent body to which this Vote alone applies, and which carries on the work which is being criticized by the temporary Commission.

Vote *agreed to.*

(5.) £1,201, to complete the sum for the National Gallery of Ireland.

(6.) £8,028, to complete the sum for the Queen's Colleges, Ireland.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I want to say only two words in connection with this Vote. There are two or three points in the Report of these Colleges to which I wish to direct attention. The first is about electric lamps. We find in the Report that the Chairman or Vice Chancellor of the University calls attention to this fact—that the deficiency really calls for remark, and he hopes that it will be remedied.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That subject would come under the Buildings Vote, Class I. This is a Vote for Salaries.

DR. TANNER: There is a point in connection with Queen's College, Cork — about technical education — about which we have heard this evening. There is a small technical school there. [*Laughter.*] Some hon. Gentlemen opposite laugh; but I understood hon. Gentlemen on the other side are in favour of technical education. The Professor at the College at Cork has lately taken steps in this direction, and he has made rather a successful commencement; but, unfortunately, he has not the funds at his command in order to bring the matter to a thoroughly successful issue. Accordingly he hopes, and we in the City of Cork hope—for my own part, having been a student at that College, I certainly wish to enforce on the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary the great good that it has done latterly, and the fact that it has been beautified to a degree that I hardly ever thought the site would have allowed of, owing altogether to private endowment—I repeat we sincerely hope the right hon. Gentleman will see his way to advance a certain sum of money to promote technical education in connection with that College. I should like to hear what the right hon. Gentleman has to say upon this matter that I have raised.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am afraid it would not be right that public funds designed for these Colleges should be devoted to technical education purposes. If private funds were forthcoming they might be so applied; but I am afraid it cannot be done under a Parliamentary grant.

DR. TANNER: Is there no fund which can be applied to such a purpose?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid not.

DR. TANNER: Will the right hon. Gentleman look into this matter?

Vote *agreed to.*

(7.) £959, to complete the sum for the Royal Irish Academy.

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

(8.) £1,800, to complete the sum for Pauper Lunatics, Ireland.

(9.) £6,658, to complete the sum for Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland.

(10.) £1,535, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland.

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(11.) £2,230, for Royal University (Ireland) Buildings.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Is this the Vote, Mr. Courtney, on which I can raise the point as to which you just now called me to Order?

THE CHAIRMAN: This is the Vote for the Royal University Buildings.

DR. TANNER: It is the Royal University I was talking about.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman was talking about the Queen's Colleges.

DR. TANNER: These Colleges form part of the Royal University.

THE CHAIRMAN: This Vote is for the buildings of the Royal University.

DR. TANNER: The Report I was reading from is the Report of the Royal University of Ireland.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member knows well that this Vote is for the buildings of the Central Establishment in Dublin, and not for the Colleges throughout Ireland.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(12.) £50,000, for Public Works and Industries (Ireland) (Special Grant).

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL.—[BILL 329.]

(*Mr. Ritchie, Mr. Secretary Stanhope, Mr. W. H. Long.*)

CONSIDERATION.

Bill, as amended, *considered.*

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): On the Question that this Bill be now considered, can I now speak as to the application of this Bill to Ireland?

MR. SPEAKER: No. There is no Question before the House.

COLONEL NOLAN: Is there not the Question before the House that this Bill be now considered?

MR. SPEAKER: No.

Clause (Election of allotment managers)—

"(1.) Where allotments have been provided under this Act for a parish in any rural district, a petition to the sanitary authority may be presented by a number of the electors of allotment managers in such parish, not being less than one-sixth of the whole number of such electors, praying for the election of allotment managers in such parish, and thereupon the sanitary authority shall order such election, and the allotment managers so elected shall be the allotment managers of the allotments in such parish, in lieu of allotment managers appointed by the sanitary authority, who, on an election under this Act, shall cease to hold office.

"(2.) The first election shall be held on such day as may, subject to the regulations hereafter mentioned, be fixed by the said authority.

"(3.) The number of allotment managers in each case shall be such (not being less than three nor more than five) as the sanitary authority may fix, and the quorum shall be three, or, if the number of managers is less than five, be two.

"(4.) The allotment managers shall retire triennially on such day as may be prescribed by the regulations hereinafter mentioned, and the allotment managers first elected shall retire on the day for retirement which occurs next after the expiration of three years after the day fixed for their election.

"(5.) Any casual vacancy among the allotment managers which occurs by death, resignation, disqualification, or otherwise, may, if there remains a quorum of allotment managers, be filled up by such managers; but the person elected to fill the vacancy shall hold office only for the same time as the vacating manager would have done.

"(6.) If, at any time, by reason of a failure of election, either by electors or allotment managers, or of any other cause, there is no allotment manager, or no quorum of allotment managers in any parish, the sanitary authority shall appoint allotment managers under this Act in that parish, and shall continue to appoint the same until another petition for the election of allotment managers is presented under this section.

"(7.) The electors of allotment managers shall be the parliamentary electors in the parish, that is to say, the persons registered in any list of parliamentary electors for the parish as entitled to vote at an election of a Member to serve in Parliament, and an elector shall not give more than one vote for any candidate nor vote for more candidates than the number to be elected.

"(8.) The election of allotment managers shall be held at such time, and in such manner, and in accordance with such regulations as the Local Government Board may from time to time by order prescribe; and the Local Government Board may make regulations respecting the duties of the returning officer, and the expenses of the election, and may do and make regulations respecting all such things as appear to them necessary or proper for carrying into effect this section, whether preliminary or incidental to such election, and for applying to such election any enactments respecting offences at the election of guardians, and may revoke or alter any previous order under this section: Provided as follows:—

"(a.) Such guardian, churchwarden, or overseer of the parish, or other person as the sanitary authority may appoint, shall be the returning officer;

"(b.) A poll, if demanded, shall be taken by ballot, and the said regulations shall provide for the application to such poll of 'The Ballot Act, 1872,' including the provisions for punishing offences;

"(c.) The poll shall be held on one day only, and shall close at eight o'clock in the evening, and shall be open for at least the period from five to eight o'clock in the evening;

"(d.) The returning officer shall not vote except in the case of an equality of votes between any candidates, in which case he shall have a casting vote;

"(e.) Any ballot boxes, instruments, fittings, and compartments provided by any public authority for parliamentary, municipal, or school board elections, or belonging to any public authority for the purpose of elections, shall be lent to the returning officer on his request for the purpose of an election of allotment managers, under such conditions and either free of charge or for such reasonable charge as may be prescribed by regulations under this section;

"(f.) The returning officer may use free of charge for the purpose of an election under this section any room in a school receiving a grant out of moneys provided by Parliament, and any room the expense of maintaining which is payable out of any rate in the parish, but he shall make good any damage done to the room, and defray any expense incurred by the person or body of persons, corporate or unincorporate, having control over the room, on account of its being so used.

"(9.) An election under this section shall not be questioned except in such manner as may be prescribed by regulations under this section, and the regulations may apply to such election any enactments respecting the questioning of an election of guardians.

"(10.) If an allotment manager is punished with imprisonment for any crime, or is adjudged a bankrupt, or enters into a composition or arrangement with his creditors, or ceases to reside in, or in the neighbourhood of, the parish, or absents himself for twelve months from all meetings of the allotment managers, except for temporary illness or other cause, to be approved by such managers, or is a tenant of any allotment under the management of the managers, he shall cease to be an allotment manager, and his office shall be vacant, and a person who, if elected, would by virtue of this enactment cease, otherwise than by reason of absence from meetings, to be a manager, shall not be qualified to be elected a manager, but, save as aforesaid, any retiring manager shall be eligible for re-election,"—(*Mr. Ritchie*,)

—*brought up*, and read a first and second time.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I have put down the following Amendment to the right hon. Gentleman's New Clause:—To leave out Sub-section (1) of the Clause, and insert the words—

"In every parish in any rural district in which this Act is put in force allotment managers shall be elected at a meeting of the vestry, which, for that purpose, shall be summoned by the overseers for half-past seven o'clock in the evening."

Sir, I move this Amendment because I think it will dispose, in a shorter way, of many other Amendments on the Paper. The object of it is to amend the 1st sub-section of the right hon. Gentleman's clause. I am sure many of us on this side of the House are deeply obliged to him for having placed the election of allotment managers on a much more satisfactory basis. But this 1st sub-section provides that, in order that the allotment managers may be elected in a parish, a petition shall be presented by a certain proportion of the electors of the allotment managers, who are afterwards defined to be the Parliamentary electors on the register, praying for an election of allotment managers for that parish. The Amendment which I have to propose, and which, as I have already said, will, I think, dispose of a number of other Amendments on the Paper, raises three points. First of all, I think the Bill should itself establish the allotment managers. I do not like this system of a certain proportion of the electors in a parish having to go praying for this and for that. I do not like the system of petitioning. I would prefer that the Bill should confer what the people claim to be entitled to as a right. The three objects I have in this Amendment are, first of all, that the Bill should establish this power of electing managers; and I would remind the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board that the Bill, as originally drawn, did so; for Clause 5, Sub-section 3, in the original Bill, provided that the Local Authority "might"—which, I think, the right hon. Gentleman said the other night would be interpreted "would"—appoint allotment managers. That required no petition from the electors; but they would be appointed by the Sanitary Authority. It is now proposed that the allotment managers should be elected by popular election. That, I think, is very much better; but, in order to have popular election, it is necessary to have some nomination, and I cannot see anything in any of the sub-sections of this New Clause which makes any such provision. I do not think that is altogether satisfactory. I think, if we are to have a popularly-elected body, the nomination ought to be at some public meeting of the electorate, and I have chosen, in my Amendment, the Vestry. I am not, however, very particular about that. I chose the Vestry because it included the ratepayers of the parish. In discussing this question you must remember, with regard to registers and other matters, that this clause applies only to parishes in rural districts, and therefore in very few cases will there be a large number of electors. Consequently, the question arises, who shall be the electors? The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board proposes that the electors should be the Parliamentary electors on the Register. That is to some extent—I do not mean entirely—inconsistent with the amended Bill, as we have passed it, because in Clause 2 of the amended Bill it speaks not only of the electors, but also of the ratepayers, and I think it is very important that the ratepayers should have an opportunity of nominating and electing the allotment managers. If the ratepayers are not to have a voice in the matter, it follows that women will have no voice in the election; and as I presume that the right hon. Gentleman intends that women shall be eligible to be allotment holders, he would not wish them to be excluded not only from electing allotment managers, but from being elected themselves, if those electing should think it well to do so. The difficulty as to the register would be very small. I am aware that the register of the ratepayers is made out in a different way from the Parliamentary register, and there would be some difficulty at first in combining the two registers; but with such a small register as it would be in a rural parish, surely that would be very trifling, and might very well be met without causing any very great inconvenience. Now, Sir, I am not going to enlarge upon this point, because I am very anxious to get the Bill passed; but there is one other point in my Amendment which I think a very important one, and which is thought a great deal of in agricultural districts; and that is, if the Government will consent to have a meeting of the ratepayers in order to nominate the allotment managers—because it is quite clear that if only a sufficient number are nominated, there will be no need for any election at all—it is very necessary indeed that such a meeting should be held at such an hour as will place it in the power of all the ratepayers to attend. I am sure the right hon. Gentleman must know that it is a very common custom—I am afraid it is almost a universal custom—for Vestries to be called when it is almost impossible for the working classes to attend; and I am sure there is not a Member representing an agricultural constituency who cannot confirm this. The objects of the Amendment which I propose are, first, to provide means of nominating the allotment managers—and I believe the holding of a public meeting would be the most suitable, because, if only a sufficient number are nominated, it will save an election; secondly, to have the electors, the ratepayers, as well as the Parliamentary electors; and, thirdly, to have the meeting at which the nomination and, perhaps, the election takes place at such an hour that all the ratepayers could attend. I have put it at half-past 7 o'clock in the evening, which I think is as convenient an hour as can be named for the meeting to be held. I say no more, but move the Amendment standing in my name.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out Sub-section (1) of the Clause, and insert the words—"In every parish in any rural district in which this Act is put in force allotment managers shall be elected at a meeting of the vestry, which for that purpose shall be summoned by the overseers for half-past seven o'clock in the evening."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

Question proposed,

"That the words '(1) Where allotments have been provided under this Act for a parish in any rural district a petition to the sanitary authority may be presented by a number of the electors of allotment managers in such parish,' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE: There are several points to which the hon. Gentleman has aluded, and I will take them one by one. He first of all objects to any requisition or petition on the part of the inhabitants as to the election of allotment managers. As the hon. Gentleman knows, we originally provided that the allotment wardens should be nominated by the Sanitary Authority; but there seemed to be a disposition on the part of certain hon. Gentlemen who take a great interest in this matter to think that there should be opportunity given to elect if it were desired that the wardens should be elected. As we ourselves had not any strong objection — or, indeed, any at all—to that proposal, we inserted words in this Amendment of mine, providing that where it was desired by a certain proportion of the inhabitants that the allotment managers should be elected, there should be an election, instead of the managers being nominated by the Sanitary Authority. The hon. Gentleman objects to a requisition; but I would point out to him that this machinery as to elections is a machinery which is likely to be of a somewhat expensive character, and it may well be that in some parishes the inhabitants may have perfect confidence that the Sanitary Authority will nominate managers who will be acceptable to the general body of the community. I say it "may" be so, and the hon. Gentleman must remember this as well—that we are living in hopes that we shall have in rural constituencies a different local representative body to that which now exists; and it may very well be, when that body is set up, that it will not be desired—I hope that will be the case—to have any election of this kind at all. In case, however, there should be in any of these parishes any feeling among the inhabitants that they would rather have the allotment wardens elected than nominated by the Sanitary Authority, we have provided that a very small number of the electors—one-sixth — shall be able to call for an election of the allotment wardens, and we think that is the smallest number that ought to be at liberty to put a parish to the very considerable expense which will undoubtedly be involved in the election of allotment wardens, however it may be done. Then the hon. Gentleman says there is no power of nomination provided for, and that there is no meeting of the ratepayers provided for at which the nomination could take place. But I would point out that this is only one of the many arrangements which will have to be made by the Local Government Board for carrying out the election; and that it would be their duty, amongst other things, in the regulations they will make for conducting the election, to lay down rules that will secure that nomination shall take place at a public meeting of the inhabitants. We have not attempted to put down in this Amendment of mine all the various pieces of the machinery which the Local Government Board will have to provide for. It is perfectly well known that there are portions of the machinery of election which will have to be laid down in rules by the Local Government Board, and the hon. Gentleman need not feel the least alarm, for, of course, a public meeting for the nomination will be provided for by the rules which the Local Government Board will lay down. Then the hon. Gentleman, in his Amendment, fixes an hour for the holding of the meeting. He will see that in my Amendment we provide that the election must be open for at least a period of three hours.

MR. COBB: That is to be done in the Bill.

MR. RITCHIE: Surely, that provision being made, the hon. Gentleman need not be afraid that the Local Government Board will not equally provide for the time of the meeting being held. Then, the hon. Gentleman asks, who are to be the electors—the Parliamentary electors or the ratepayers? I say at once, we do not place the slightest stress upon whether they are the Parliamentary electors or the ratepayers. We selected the Parliamentary electors solely for convenience and for cheapness. But there is this material difference between Parliamentary electors and the ratepayers—that we have the machinery ready to our hands in the case of the Parliamentary electors. We have the electoral roll—the register. The hon. Gentleman will see that if we take the rate-book it will be necessary to cut it up into alphabetical order, and as there will be several polling places, you will have to do that for several polling places, while all you have to do in the case of the Parliamentary register is to provide yourselves with two or three copies of it. It is purely a matter of convenience. The hon. Gentleman says the Parliamentary register would exclude women; but, on the other hand, if he takes the rate-book he will exclude a very important number of electors—he would exclude lodgers——

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): And service voters.

MR. RITCHIE: Yes; and service voters. I venture to say the Parliamentary register will be much more inclusive than the rate-book. I have explained that it is for purely a matter of convenience and cheapness that we take the register of Parliamentary voters.

MR. STAVELEY HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I venture to suggest to the House a course which may, perhaps, save some time. So many Amendments have been put on the Paper that it is impossible, within the limited time allowed to us at the end of the Session, to consider them so as to do justice to them. The Bill is a piece of bad draftsmanship, misconception of facts, and such an utter mass of rubbish, that we had better save our time and pass it as it is. It will, at any rate, serve to pad the lean cover of our Statute volume of this Session, and may exist then as a monument of claptrap legislation and of incompetency.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board whether I rightly understood him to say he would undertake that the nomination of these allotment managers would be made at a public meeting, and that such meeting would take place at an hour which was convenient?

Mr. RITCHIE: Certainly.

Sir WALTER FOSTER: If that is the case, I think my hon. Friend the Member for Rugby (Mr. Cobb) will withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. COBB: I will withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Captain COTTON (Cheshire, Wirral): I rise to suggest, in the proposed new clause of the Government, that for "one-sixth" of the electors "one-third" should be substituted, because I think a sixth of the whole number would be a very small fraction to set the expensive machinery in motion for the election of three allotment managers. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has himself alluded to expensive machinery, and I would suggest to him that "one-third" of the electors would be a more adequate proportion for the purpose of setting that machinery in motion. I beg to move, in line 4 of the proposed new clause, to leave out the words "one-sixth," in order to insert "one-third."

Amendment proposed to the Clause, in line 4, to leave out the words "one-sixth," in order to insert the words "one-third."—(*Captain Cotton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'one-sixth' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE: I think there is a great deal of force in what has been stated by my hon. and gallant Friend; but, at the same time, I feel compelled to adhere to the Bill as it stands.

Question, "That the words 'one-sixth" stand part of the Clause," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): In the Amendment I am about to move I say—

"Where such number of electors is less than two hundred, or in any other case by at least thirty such electors;"

but I shall be glad to accept any other suitable number which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board may suggest. The point I desire to enforce is simply this—the number of those who are interested in allotments and in the appointment of managers may be relatively a small proportion. Some of the parishes affected by this Bill will have a very large number of electors. In small parishes a sixth is very fair; but in very large parishes, even that proportion might be an obstacle.

Amendment proposed to the Clause,

In line 4, after the word "number," to insert the words "where such number of electors is less than two hundred, or in any other case by at least thirty such electors."—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. RITCHIE: I am sorry to be compelled to decline this Amendment. I am sure the hon. Gentleman will see the difficulty it would raise, and I trust the Amendment will not be pressed.

Mr. CHANNING: I do not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. COBB: The object of the Amendments I have on the Paper, and which come next, is that the number of the managers should be fixed, not by the Sanitary Authority, but by the regulations of the Local Government Board; but if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has any objection to them I will withdraw them.

Mr. RITCHIE: I have.

Amendments, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): My Amendment relates to the election of allotment managers, and I propose, in line 32 of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board's clause, after the words "shall be," to insert these words—"the ratepayers and." I cannot conceive on what possible principle the Parliamentary electors are to be made the electors of the allotment managers, and one of the results of the clause as it stands would be to introduce into elections of allotment managers a decidedly political element. I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government say that he laid no stress on the question as long as the electing body were the ratepayers. Nevertheless, he said, he preferred the Parliamentary electors, because that was the more convenient arrangement. Surely, he must have forgotten that all our Local Boards, Town Councils, and so forth, are, at the present time, elected by the ratepayers, and in this particular case I hold that the ratepayers are the proper persons to elect the managers, because they are in the first instance responsible for the loans that must be obtained for the purchase of the allotment lands. Then, I say that the ratepayers are a larger and more comprehensive body than the Parliamentary electors. They include women, and I think that as they are responsible for the money required, they ought to have a voice in the election of those who will manipulate the expenditure. I should be glad to see both ratepayers and Parliamentary electors included; but if we must have one or the other, I should prefer the ratepayers.

Amendment proposed to the Clause, in line 32, after the words "shall be," to insert the words "the ratepayers and."—(*Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. RITCHIE: Allow me to point out that the Committee have already decided, on the Amendment of the hon. Member for the Rugby Division of Warwick (Mr. Cobb), that the electors are not to be the ratepayers. The hon. Member's Amendment was to leave out Sub-section 1, for the purpose of inserting the words—

> "In every parish in any rural district in which this Act is put in force allotment managers shall be elected at a meeting of the Vestry, which for that purpose shall be summoned by the overseers for half-past seven o'clock in the evening."

Of course, a meeting of the Vestry means a meeting of the ratepayers, and that Amendment was not assented to. What is proposed to be done by this Amendment would add tenfold to the difficulty, because the hon. Member has said he would like to make the constituency both the Parliamentary electors and the ratepayers. Therefore, you would not only require the Parliamentary register of electors, but also the rate-book, and the difficulty which would thus be created is the reason why the Government object to the Amendment.

MR. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board seems to be under a mistake. The Amendment of the hon. Member for the Rugby Division of Warwick was withdrawn, and not negatived; and therefore, I take it, that the hon. Member for the Ashburton Division of Devon is in Order in moving this Amendment. I sincerely trust that my hon. Friend will press his Amendment to a Division, because I certainly hold that the ratepayers are the proper authority in such a matter, and that it would be improper to exclude from the election of allotment managers women who are ratepayers. If the right hon. Gentleman would like to add the Parliamentary electors, it will be quite open for him to do so, and probably there would be no objection to that proposal. It would be a retrograde step if in these elections we were to go back to the principle which withheld the local franchise from women. I very strongly support the Amendment of my hon. Friend.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I cannot concur in this Amendment, because I think it would unnecessarily complicate the question under discussion. As the Amendment stands, it would read "The ratepayers and the Parliamentary electors," and that would be the cause of so much confusion and unnecessary expense in the elections under the Bill that I am quite certain no one with any knowledge of these matters would desire to occasion. On the other hand, if we were to give the election to the ratepayers only, the Amendment would have an exclusive action, because it would leave out all the lodgers and those who in Parliamentary elections possess the service franchise.

MR. ROUND (Essex, N.E., Harwich): I should hesitate to support the Amendment, because in the agricultural districts it would practically exclude the larger portion of the labourers.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. COBB: I do not propose to move the whole of the Amendments I have put on the Paper, but I propose to move the one which applies to Sub-section 8, and is intended to leave out the words "such guardian, churchwarden, or overseer," and insert the words "one of the overseers." It seems to me that it would not be a proper thing for the Sanitary Authority to have a member of their body a Returning Officer, nor would it be well to have a churchwarden as Returning Officer.

Amendment proposed to the Clause, in Sub-section (8), line 48, to leave out the words "such guardian, churchwarden, or overseer," in order to insert the words "one of the overseers."—(*Mr. Cobb.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. RITCHIE: I assure the Committee that the only reason the Government have had in putting in this sub-section was to give the Sanitary Authority some scope or choice in case it were found that one or other of the office holders might not be suitable for the position. I can very readily conceive that neither of the overseers in certain rural parishes might be persons fitted for the onerous and delicate duties they would have to discharge under this Bill, and to settle the various points which might arise. It is quite conceivable that neither one nor the other might be fit for the office. The hon. Member says "one of the overseers." Who is to decide as to which of the overseers should be appointed? As it stands, the clause provides that the Sanitary Authority should have a choice. Surely it would be the object of the Sanitary Authority to appoint persons thoroughly fit for the work. It would seem, however, to be the idea of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Cobb) that the authority might have a desire to choose someone who would act in a manner contrary to the spirit of the clause. If he objects to the churchwarden being appointed, I have not the slightest objection to strike the churchwarden out, supposing that will meet his view.

Mr. COBB: That would be satisfactory.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. HARRY T. DAVENPORT (Staffordshire, Leek): I want to call attention to a point which I think comes before the next Amendment on the Paper. The sub-section gives the Returning Officer power as to the use of elementary schools for election purposes. The Amendment I would propose is—

"That the election shall be carried on a day and at such a time as will not interfere with the ordinary work of the school."

Mr. Cobb

I would suggest that the day should be Saturday.

Mr. RITCHIE: I should propose to meet the suggestion by inserting, after the word "may," in line 67, Sub-section 8, the words "except during ordinary school hours."

The CHAIRMAN: I do not see that that suggestion would work very satisfactorily.

Mr. RITCHIE: If you put in the words I suggest, you might have the whole of Saturday afternoon.

Mr. JESSE COLLINGS: I hope the Committee will allow the clause to remain as it is and not alter it in that way. As proposed it might necessitate a holiday for the children, and that we do not object to.

Mr. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I am afraid the poll would occupy a considerable time, and I do not see how it is to take place in the school-room without detriment to the school.

Mr. RITCHIE: I would point out that provision is made in the Bill that the polls are to be taken between 5 o'clock and 8 o'clock in the evening; and looking at the fact that the school work is generally over at 5 o'clock, there would be no interference with the ordinary school hours.

Mr. TOMLINSON (Preston): I think the difficulty might be got over by inserting the words "when not required for school purposes."

Amendments made.

Clause, as amended, *added.*

Mr. RITCHIE: When the Bill was in Committee, the Government struck out the clause which excluded Ireland from its operation, on the understanding that they would further consider whether they might meet the desire expressed to extend the measure to Ireland. The Government have very anxiously considered this matter, and they have come to the conclusion that it would not be possible to extend the Bill to Ireland. I would point out that Ireland is already in possession of not only one or two or three Acts in connection with the provision of allotments for labourers in that country, but that she possesses no fewer than four such Acts. The machinery of those Acts is, it is true, different from the machinery contained in this Bill; but in so far as it is different, it has been expressly altered by an amended Act of

1883. The first Act was in 1882, and in that it was enacted that where a Provisional Order was made it should be confirmed by Parliament. It was found, however, that that provision worked so badly that in 1883 it was necessary to pass another measure, by which the Parliamentary confirmation was removed, and the matter was left to the Privy Council of Ireland. That Bill, in fact, goes in many respects even further than the present measure. It provides not only for allotments, but also for the building of cottages; and not only that, but for taking allotments compulsorily by lease. Thus the House will see that in many respects that Act goes beyond the provisions of the existing Bill. We therefore find that on this occasion Ireland does not seem to stand in want of further legislation in the matter, the last Act passed for Ireland having been passed in 1886. Beyond this, I may say that we have been discussing this Bill throughout as if it were not to apply to Ireland. It is true that the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for North Galway (Colonel Nolan) raised the question on the Committee stage of the Bill, but there was no intimation on the part of his Colleagues that they shared his desire to extend the Bill to Ireland. I would remind the hon. and gallant Gentleman that an hon. Friend of his —the Member for South Kilkenny (Mr. Chance)—took considerable part in the discussion of this Bill in Committee, without ever raising the question of applying the method to Ireland, and I remember that when he was discussing the matter he was challenged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) on the ground that he was discussing a measure that did not apply to Ireland. It is plain, therefore, that if he wished it to apply to Ireland, he would, under those circumstances, have said so; but he never said a word to lead the House to such a conclusion. We are now, consequently, in this position, that having discussed this Bill in the belief it was not to apply to Ireland, we are now asked, after the Committee stage is over, to re-open the question and apply the complicated provisions of this measure to Ireland, without having considered that proposal in Committee. I think the House would have a just ground of complaint against Her Majesty's Government, if now, at the last stage of this measure, we should attempt to do that which we never previously intended to do, and which the hon. Members representing Ireland never themselves asked for. Well, then there is the question of time. It is perfectly evident that if this Bill is to apply to Ireland, it will take a long series of Amendments to adapt it to the condition of things there; and at this period of the Session to discuss this altogether new question, and carry through the numerous Amendments necessary, means the occupation of so much time that it would practically defeat the Bill altogether. Having considered all these matters, and seeing that Ireland is supplied with an Allotments Act for herself, it is quite impossible at this late stage to attempt to apply this Bill to Ireland. I will go the length of saying that if there are any of the provisions of this Bill that hon. Members would desire to apply to Ireland, it seems to me the proper mode would be to proceed by amendment of the Irish Acts, not by amending this Bill. The Government are willing to consider any recommendations from Irish Members. Between this and next Session they will consider any representations with a view to seeing if they could be met by amendment of existing Acts.

Clause (Extent of Act,)—(*Mr. Ritchie,*) —*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): The right hon. Gentleman has made some singular remarks. I expected him, when he said the Bill as it stood would not apply to Ireland, that he would point out some clause that would not apply. I think only a few verbal Amendments are required. He says the hon. and learned Member for North Longford (Mr. T. M. Healy) and myself sat silent while he made Amendments not applicable to Ireland, and other Members did the same. Well, that was an act of self-sacrifice, and showed how complaisant we were in the matter, willing to take any Amendments the right hon. Gentleman introduced. He made one important omission in pointing out how many Irish acts we have—he was wrong, I think, in mentioning the last as 1886. I think it was 1885.

Mr. RITCHIE: No; 1886.

Colonel NOLAN: Well, I will not contradict that. But when he pointed out the Acts that applied to Ireland, his argument would have been much more convincing to me if, instead of showing there were four Acts, he had shown there were 40,000 allotments existing under those Acts. That would have been an excellent argument; but he did not show that, nor could he, because they are not numerous. There are none in my part of the country. There are some houses with land to them, but I contemplate a totally different condition of things. I contemplate artizans in towns as well as labourers in the country getting small quantities of land without the necessity of building new houses. True, under one of our Acts there is power to give half-an-acre of land; but this power has been in operation to a trifling extent only. I do not myself know any case in which it has been put into effect, though I dare say it has been put into effect, though to a very small extent. There are several reasons for this. On the point of machinery I do not profess to be an excellent judge, but having heard the machinery of the Labourers' Act discussed in Ireland, I am able to form some opinion upon that. The reason I wish to see this Bill extended to Ireland is for the Grazing Clause—the power to acquire pasture land. That could easily be put in force in Ireland; the Board of Guardians would have nothing to do but take a field and allow a certain number of people to turn their cows or cattle on to it. Around the town of Loughrea, for instance, there are hundreds of acres of grazing land, coming up to the walls of the houses, and yet you will find the labourers there complain they cannot get the smallest bit of pasture land for a cow; and the same sort of thing exists in other towns. This alone would to me be a sufficient reason for rejecting this clause, by which the right hon. Gentleman wishes to exclude Ireland from this Bill. Again, it is a simple question of quantity; it is, as it were, the difference between sixpence and a shilling. Under the Irish Labourers' Allotments Act, Boards of Guardians or other bodies may let half-an-acre, and that is the limit; while this Bill allows one acre. Now, that is a considerable difference, and will be of so much greater advantage that people will go to the trouble of trying to obtain land by compulsory purchase, where they would not trouble to agitate, pay the law expenses, and other expenses, to get only half-an-acre. I can quite understand that townspeople would desire to get an acre of land. There are two reasons why I wish to see the Bill extended to Ireland. Again, the greater simplicity of the machinery to set the Bill in motion is a great advantage. To begin with, it is better to have only six people to put it in operation than 10. Altogether, it seems to me the machinery is simpler and less open to the objection of a contentious minority, such as you will always have on these bodies. It would save those appeals to the Privy Council which, in Ireland, are extremely expensive. The right hon. Gentleman says Irish Members wished to have the reference to the Privy Council; well, we may have made a mistake in imagining the Privy Council to be be better than it is. But there is no doubt the result in Ireland in many cases has been that people who have applied have had their applications rejected with costs quite sufficient to deter many others making a similar application. So the Labourers' Act is not put into operation on a large scale. In some of the Southern districts it is, perhaps, used; but in the West it is almost a dead letter. It is not because the people do not wish for it—they are anxious to get the allotment land—it is because the machinery is not available. The machinery of this Bill is much more available from its greater simplicity. Certainly it would provide a valuable alternative, and might prove a cheaper plan. Another point to which I attach great importance is being put into the same Allotments Act with England. Although I am a strong advocate for Home Rule, I think that when Englishmen make laws applicable to both England and Ireland, they are much more careful than when they apply an Act to Ireland only. That, of course, is only natural. With the Bill applied to both countries, we should be able to compare the results; and if our Local Authorities threw obstacles in the way of the operation of the Bill, we should be able to detect that by comparison with the proper working of the Act under English Local Authorities. Thus we should have a check on the action of Irish Local Authorities, which would facilitate the action of the Bill. An Allotment Act is useless unless it is actively employed. It is not an Act to remain on the Statute Book useful in an emergency, it must be put in operation; but the Labourers' Act in my country is used to a very small extent. Therefore, I think it would be a great advantage to extend this Bill to Ireland. Though I move to reject the whole clause, I will, if it is the desire of Scotch Members, restrict my action to Ireland, leaving Scotland outside the Bill. I am extremely sorry the question was not decided in Committee, when Irish Members, who are now scattered, were in attendance; still I think we ought to take a Division. The right hon. Gentleman holds out a promise that the subject shall be considered during the Recess; but between now and February many things may happen to thrust this matter aside—a General Election may occur, for instance, and there is an old adage that "a bird in hand is worth two in the bush." We have only an indefinite promise; and I hope the few Members we have will mark their sense of the neglect of Ireland in the Division.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would have had something to say as regards Scotland. Every argument he has used for the exclusion of Ireland would apply in favour of including Scotland. It is a very important matter for a large number of my constituents, who are compelled to pay £6 or £8 an acre, to get a small portion of land for themselves. It would affect the cotter class, who are kept outside the Crofters' Act, and who have no land around their houses. There was evidence before the Crofter Commission showing the deterioration of children from the want of milk among the cotter class; and this land would supply pasturage. Fishermen also want small quantities of land badly; and the same may be said of the quarrymen, who, during parts of the year, work upon the land. Our demands are, at least, equal to those in England. I do not say this Bill is very valuable in itself; but it does contai a valuable principle, that will be extended by-and-bye. It will be urged that to apply the Bill to Scotland would take time; that it must be subjected to great modifications; but I think, on examination, it will be found necessary to use a few Scotch terms in addition to English, and the Amendments in this direction need take but a short time.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to move that this question be deferred. I put this question to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith)—Are there not two Scotch Bills on the Orders which will occupy some time? If it is agreed that these Bills are not to be taken to-night, then I will not press my Motion.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I trust that having regard to the period of the Session, hon. Members will not object to sitting a little later than usual, seeing also that a number of Members interested have waited for the discussion of this Bill. With regard to the Scotch Bills, I am told they will take but a very little time, and for these also I understand Members have waited. I do not wish to press my view unduly; but I rather think the hon. Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) will find himself in a minority of one among Scotch Members in his desire to postpone these Bills.

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is that this clause be read a second time. The hon. Member has not moved anything; he is not able to move that this Question be deferred.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I trust the Government will insist on carrying the clause, and that there will be no opposition to it. I do not consider that this Bill is at all applicable to Scotland, and if only Irish Members will stand by us, I believe we shall be able to get a much better Bill for Ireland and Scotland. My reason for suggesting this to our Friends from Ireland is that, in my opinion, the Bill contains a very vicious principle, giving Local Authorities the power to acquire land. I believe we should be quite content with a Bill if you give us one on the principle of compelling reluctant and unwilling landlords to sell at a fair valuation, leaving the people to do all the rest. I am sure if we can get a Bill of that kind we can accomplish all that is required for Ireland and Scotland. I can quite sympathize with English Members who are anxious to have the Bill with this principle in it. I am quite satisfied if they are; but we do not want it for Scotland, and I hope the clause will be agreed to.

Dr. TANNER (Cork, Co., Mid): I support my hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan) who suggested the rejection of the clause. As there is a divergence of opinion amongst Scotch Members, perhaps it would be better to amend the clause by omitting the reference to Scotland.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member would not be in Order in moving an Amendment now. The question of reading the clause has to be first decided.

Dr. TANNER: Very well, Sir. Then I rise rise for the purpose of supporting my hon. and gallant Friend. We have heard a great deal about labourers in Ireland, though I am afraid they receive but small consideration. I do not say this Bill will be of great benefit to our people, but I will supplement my hon. Friend's proverb about a bird in hand, by saying half a loaf is better than no bread. I will not weary the House by tedious repetition of arguments my hon. and gallant Friend has adduced; I will only say that it would be a great point gained to have one acre instead of half-an-acre, it is somewhat nearer the original suggestion of three acres. Even minus the cow, this would be a very great thing for our Irish labourers. It is a difficult thing for them to get half-an acre now, and when they do get it it is more often land quite unsuitable for their purpose. There are points in the Bill that would prove of permanent advantage to us if the right hon. Gentleman will show a little of that charity which has been talked about. We have given proof that "the quality of mercy is not strained;" it droppeth from the Irish Benches on to the Treasury Bench, and if we have done them some service, surely they might, even though late, reciprocate the favours they have received and allow the extension of this Bill to Ireland. It would be doing something for the poorer people in a time of necessity and trouble. In any case it can do no harm, and in process of time it may be accounted as something to the credit of the Conservative Party.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I think my hon. and gallant Friend has made out a conclusive case. I intend to support him, and I apprehend the same course will be followed by all the Irish Members present.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 117; Noes 42: Majority 75. [2.0 A.M.]

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burghley, Lord
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elton, C. I.
Evelyn, W. J.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fetcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Grimston, Viscount
Hall, C.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Hornby, W. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kimber, H.
King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Laurie, Colonel R. P.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Long, W. H.
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
Madden, D. H.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Mason, S.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Powell, F. S.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.

Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robertson, W. T.
Round, J.
Selwin-Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Selwyn, Capt. C. W.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Whitmore, C. A.
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Biggar, J. G.
Burt, T.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Chamberlain, R.
Channing, F. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Cobb, H. P.
Collings, J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cossham, H.
Deasy, J.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Finucane, J.
Flynn, J. C.
Fuller, G. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Hunter, W. A.
Kenny, M. J.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
M'Arthur, W. A.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Mulholland, H. L.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Quinn, T.
Rowlands, J.
Sexton, T.
Stack, J.
Stewart, H.
Tanner, C. K.
Tuite, J.
Winterbotham, A. B.

TELLERS.

Clark, Dr. G. B.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.

Clause *added*.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): The House will recollect that in Committee on this Bill my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh) brought forward an Amendment, the object of which was to prevent the arbitrary awarding of the 10 per cent additional compensation in the event of land being taken compulsorily for the purpose of this Act. The Amendment came on for discussion at a very unfortunate hour, that is to say, at 4 o'clock in the morning, and when the hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) had replied on behalf of the Government, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) moved the closure without waiting for any further discussion. I think this was somewhat unfortunate, but I do not propose on the present occasion to repeat in full the proposal of the hon. Member for Northampton. I intend to move it in a somewhat restricted form, however, in order to meet the objections urged by the right hon. and learned Attorney General in Committee. The hon. and learned Attorney General stated very correctly that the practice of giving 10 per cent additional compensation for land taken compulsorily is universal, except in the single case of land under the Artizans' Dwellings Act, and he pointed out that, under that measure, if a landowner neglects his property in a manner that requires the intervention of the Act, the arbitrator should not award any additional compensation. What I now propose is to apply that principle to this Bill. It appears to me that if a landowner refuses or neglects to let land to his labourers for allotments, or declines to let the land to the Local Authorities for that purpose, and it becomes necessary to have resort to the compulsory powers, it is not right or fair that the man should receive the additional 10 per cent. compensation. The effect of giving him such additional compensation would be to enable him to screw a higher rent out of the Local Authority, and therefore out of the allotment holders, or else it would enable him to compel the Local Authority to put the compulsory powers of the Act in force, and to incur all the expenses attending a compulsory purchase. What I propose is to insert after Clause 3 the following clause:—

> "The arbitrator appointed under Clause 3 of this Act, in awarding compensation to any owner of land for land taken for the purposes of this Act, shall not give any allowance in respect of compulsory purchase thereof, if it is proved to his satisfaction that the persons for whom the land is required for allotments, or the greater number thereof, are employed as labourers upon land belonging to such owner."

This appears to me to be a sound principle to act upon. It is, as I have pointed out, in accordance with the principle laid down in the Artizans' Dwellings Act, and is a proposal which, I think, ought to be adopted in this Bill. It may be said that the clause so restricted will have a somewhat limited application, but that is not so, because the House will know that the great majority of parishes in this country belong to a single landowner. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, hon. Members deny that. I have taken some pains at various times to investigate the statistics on that point, and I am very confident that half the parishes either belong to single owners or are rated to single owners. [*Cries of* "More!"] Some say more than half. At all events, it is certain that some 10,000 persons own between them three-fourths of all the agricultural land in England and Wales, and as there are only 12,000 rural parishes it seems probably that I am right in what I have said, and that the majority of the parishes either belong to single owners, or that many of them belong to one owner, and therefore I say that the clause would not have a limited application. It will only apply to the landowner who has refused to give to the labourers employed on his property proper garden allotments, or has refused to lease the land to the Local Authorities at a reasonable rent. In such cases, and in such cases only, I propose that the additional 10 per cent. compensation shall not be awarded by the arbitrator.

Clause (Additional compensation for compulsory purchase not to be awarded in certain cases,)—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre,*) —*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): Mr. Speaker, for some of the reasons I urged on a previous occasion, I am obliged to say that the Government cannot accept this clause. I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) that he has not very carefully studied the operation of his own clause. He proposes that a sort of penalty should be imposed in one particular case—that is to say, where the persons for whom the land is required for allotments, or the greater number of them are employed as labourers upon land belonging to the owner. The right hon. Gentleman seems entirely to have forgotten that, even assuming the accuracy of the somewhat astonishing statement that the great majority of parishes are owned by single persons, in nearly all of them the land would be let to farmers. He does not mean to say that of the 10,000 owners who own parishes every one of them farm their own land. If not, his suggestion amounts to this—that if the farmer, who, under ordinary circumstances, does provide his labourers with allotments, does not do so in a particular instance, the owner is to be the sufferer. I say that, as a rule, the labourers who are employed by farmers have allotments provided for them. But what is frequently the case? Labourers are not perpetually employed on the same farm, and numbers of them frequently move about. Does the right hon. Gentleman mean by this clause that owners are to be deprived of the additional compensation if they do not provide allotments for labourers who are only employed for a few months? It must also be remembered that circumstances may arise in which the owner is not himself able to provide the land in the way that the Act provides, and the compulsory powers have to be put in force. All this is disregarded by the right hon. Gentleman. There is one practical objection to the clause to which I should like to allude. It is proposed to raise an issue which is entirely foreign to the functions of the arbitrator who has to settle the award—namely, whether it can be satisfactorily proved that the persons for whom the land is required for allotments or the greater number of them are employed as labourers on land belonging to the particular owner. Has the right hon. Gentleman considered what would be the practical results of such an inquiry taking place? They would be that a considerable amount of evidence would be taken and very considerable discussion would arise. The whole thing would be entirely foreign to the functions that even have to be performed by the arbitrator who has to assess compensation. The right hon. Gentleman has referred to no one case in support of his proposal, and I ask the House not to agree to the clause.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I quite agree with the principle contained in the Amendment, and, if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford goes to a Division, I think I shall be obliged to vote with him. At the same time, I must point out that the difficulties of putting a provision of this kind in force would be very great. In some villages there might be part of the land taken from a man who would come under this clause, and part taken from someone who would not come under the clause. These labourers who occupy these allotments are a changing quantity. A man who to-day is settled on the land will in the course of a year or two years be in a different place altogether. That being so, I hope the right hon. Gentleman who has moved this clause will be content with having stated the principle, and will not go to a Division upon it. After all, it would only make a difference of 1*s.*, or 1*s.* 6*d.*, or 2*s.* per acre in the rent of the allotment; and, on the other hand, there would be great expense connected with the determining of the question involved. Therefore, although the principle is sound, the practical application would be difficult. We must bear in mind that what we have to do is to make this Act popular with the ratepayers and to all concerned, and that the more difficulties we place in the way of its operation the less likely are we to make it popular. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not go to a Division.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): Mr. Speaker, I hope, on the other hand, that the right hon. Gentleman will go to a Division. I do not believe that the landowners of the country—the Conservative landowners included—wish for this compensation clause, and I should like to hear from the other side of the House an expression of opinion, such as I have heard outside the House, to that effect. This matter was somewhat rushed through Committee, owing to the application of the closure, when we wanted to contend that it was the duty of the landowner to facilitate the provision of these allotments. I believe that a large number of landowners feel it to be their duty to do this, and are quite willing to do it. But I wish to point out that it is the unwilling landowner who is the man likely to take the greatest advantage of this compensation. The difficulty you would have in getting Boards of Guardians to carry out the provisions of the Act would be principally due to fear of loss to the ratepayers. That would be the great argument used against putting the measure in force. The occasional landowner has simply to hold aloof; to say —"I will not come to any terms with you; I require such and such an impossible rent; and you can only drive me at last to an impossible scale of compensation." He has only to take a course of this kind, and he will have the Sanitary Authority at his mercy. There will not be one Sanitary Authority out of 20 that will run the risk of purchasing under such conditions. I regret that the whole question was not thoroughly debated in Committee, and I shall certainly vote for the Amendment with the object of seeing how many hon. Gentlemen will support this 10 per cent extra value—[*Cries of* "No, no!"]—this 10 per cent fine upon the labourer's allotment, this 10 per cent burden put upon the experiment which they say they are so anxious to pay, this 10 per cent addition to the value of the land. I hope my right hon. Friend will go to a Division.

MR. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth): May I point out to the House how very inequitably this clause might be made to work if it were carried into law. Take the case of a Local Authority wishing to acquire 20 acres of land situated 10 acres on one side and 10 on the other side of a road. Such 20 acres to accommodate 13 labourers. If, with regard to the owner of the land on the right hand side of the road, it could be proved that the labourers were anxious for allotments, and that seven out of the 13 were employed by him, the owner could be made to part with his land without obtaining any additional compensation. If, however, on the left hand side of the road there were only six out of the 13 labourers to be provided with allotments, the owner would receive the additional 10 per cent. The labourers employed on the land are always a varying number, and consequently this clause would be a most inconvenient one to work. I think, also, it would be most inequitable in its application, and I hope that the House—seeing that the clause is one which will give rise to a large amount of injustice and heart-burning—will reject it.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): This, Sir, is not the first time in the course of the debates on this Bill that we have heard of injustice to the landowner. I do not think, however, that anyone on the opposite side of the House has spoken of the injustice to the labourers, which has been going on for many generations, and to which we are anxious to put an end. I think that the marginal note to this clause, instead of being "Additional compensation for compulsory purchase not to be awarded in certain cases," ought to be made to read "Additional compensation for compulsory purchase not to be awarded in any case." That would certainly be more just to the labourers. The clause, moreover, strikes at the principle against which we protested at the beginning of the discussion of this Bill—namely, the principle which allows land to be acquired at a price over and above its market value as between a willing seller and a willing buyer. I think that the clause ought also to be supported on another ground. The very person whom we want, above all, to get at, is the landowner who is not doing his duty. You are actually putting a premium on his unwillingness to meet the views of the Local Authority, by saying that he shall receive 10 per cent compensation if the compulsory powers of the Act have to be resorted to. By this clause we take from him this premium on his obstinacy. On the ground that we ought to give the labourers a fair chance in this matter, I hope the House will support the clause.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I believe I have no right of reply; but I wish to say that, in order to meet the objection of the hon. and learned Attorney General, I should be quite willing to put the word "usually" before the word "employed" near the end of my clause.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 39; Noes 109: Majority 70. [2.15 A.M.]

AYES.

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Biggar, J. G.
Burt, T.
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Chamberlain, R.
Channing, F. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Collings, J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cossham, H.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Finucane, J.
Flynn, J. C.
Fuller, G. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hunter, W. A.
Kenny, M. J.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lawson, H. L. W.
M'Arthur, W. A.
M'Laren, W. S. B.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Quinn, T.
Rowlands, J.
Sexton, T.
Stack, J.
Stewart, H.
Tanner, C. K.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tuite, J.

TELLERS.

Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Winterbotham, A. B.

NOES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burghley, Lord
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elton, C. I.
Evelyn, W. J.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fellowes, A. E.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Goschen, rt. hn. G. J.
Grimston, Viscount
Hall, C.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Hornby, W. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Isaacson, F. W.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kimber, H.
King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Long, W. H.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Marriott, right hon. W. T.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Adml. R. C.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Powell, F. S.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Selwin-Ibbetson, right hon. Sir H. J.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Whitmore, C. A.
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Mr. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): Sir, in the clause which stands in my name on the Paper with reference to minutes and accounts, the only difference between it and the clause which I see is now in the Bill is as to the publication of accounts. I do not know why the right hon. Gentleman has left that out, but I move the clause formally in order that he may explain.

Clause (Minutes and accounts and register of allotments to be kept by sanitary authority, and to be open to inspection of ratepayers,)—(*Mr. Cobb,*) —*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I understand that the only question between the hon. Gentleman and the Government, is the question of the publication of the accounts. I do not like the proposal which the hon. Gentleman makes, as I think it would involve a good deal of trouble and a good deal of expense, but, if he is prepared to withdraw his clause, I will move this one—

> "And within one month after the 25th day of March in every year shall cause an annual statement showing their receipts and expenditure under this Act, in respect of the year ending on that day, and their liabilities outstanding on that day, to be deposited at some convenient place in the district, if urban, or the parish to which the statement relates, if the district is rural, and any ratepayer may, without fee, inspect and take copies of such statement."

MR. COBB: I withdraw my clause.

Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. COBB: I now move a clause respecting the continuance of the Act, My object in putting it down was to get some expression of opinion from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, or rather some assurance from him that by the 31st of December 1889, at all events as far as the Government to which he belongs is concerned, we shall have some popularly elected authority substituted for the Boards of Guardians. I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say at an early period of the debate, that there was no doubt that would be so under the Local Government Bill which he is about to introduce. If that be so, of course I will not press this clause. My only object in bringing it forward is to express the want of confidence there is in the Boards of Guardians of this country. But I believe I am right in understanding the right hon. Gentleman to say that by the Bill he is going to introduce next year, a popularly elected authority is to be substituted for the Boards of Guardians.

Clause (Continuance of Act,)—(*Mr. Cobb,*)—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I have already said more than once that it is the intention of the Government, on the earliest possible day, to introduce a Bill dealing with Local Government, not only providing Local Government for counties, but also dealing with Boards of Guardians and other Local Authorities, which, I hope, will be placed on a more popular basis.

MR. COBB: I am willing to withdraw my Amendment. As to the next clause standing in my name dealing with the application of any surplus in the hands of a Rural Sanitary Authority, that raises a point of considerable importance, which the right hon. Gentleman, no doubt, understands far better than I do. There is no doubt that if this Bill becomes law, in a certain number of years the land which has been purchased will be the property of the sanitary charge, and be free of debt—or, rather, it will be the property of each parish. This land will have been paid for by the rents taken from those who hire the allotments; and the question very properly arises who is to be entitled to deal with those rents when they no longer have to be devoted to paying off the purchase money. The land will probably be paid for in a period of 30, 40, or 50 years; I think the right hon. Gentleman said that 30 years would be the time over which the loan would be extended. Now, when that has occurred, are the rents to be applied in reduction of the rates? I think that that would be a very vicious principle myself. Or shall the land be applied for the general benefit of the parish, according to the votes of the parishioners? If the right hon. Gentleman fails to give me a satisfactory answer to these questions, I shall be compelled to press the matter to a Division.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Clause (Application of any surplus in hands of rural Sanitary Authority,)—(*Mr. Cobb,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

MR. RITCHIE : The hon. Gentleman, by this clause, is looking very far into the future. He is providing that a certain step shall be taken by a Sanitary Authority 50 years hence, as it is quite certain that such an authority will not be doing its duty if it does not borrow the money on a scale of repayment extending over as long a period as possible. That money can easily be borrowed for 50 years from the Public Works Loan Commissioners, while I have no doubt that from other sources it could be obtained for 60 years. Now, the hon. Gentleman wants the Committee to decide exactly what is to be done with a surplus accruing 50 or 60 years hence. He fixes by his clause a mode in which that decision is to be arrived at. I think he is going rather beyond the necessities of the case. We may fairly leave this matter to settle itself in the future.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley): I can hardly understand an hon. Member, who believes in local self-government, desiring to tie the hands of a Local Authority in a matter like this. The object of those who believe in the principle of local self-government is to enlarge the powers of Local Authorities, especially as they are to be placed on a better representative footing. Hon. Members may smile, but if they had had the experience which my hon. Friend the Member for the Ilkeston Division of Derby (Sir Walter Foster) and myself have had, they would see the desirability of trying to give as large powers as possible to a Local Authority, instead of interfering with or curtailing them. This clause seeks to bind the hands of Local Authorities, not only for the present, but for all time; and yet the hon. Member states, in a contradictory manner, that the surplus is to be spent for the benefit of the ratepayers of a parish, as they, by resolution in vestry, publicly summoned, shall decide. But that is a power which they will possess even if this proposal is not carried; and, therefore, I hope the Motion will not be pressed.

Question put, and *negatived.*

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to move the following clause:—

> "Nothing in this Act shall enable any sanitary authority to purchase compulsorily any existing labourers' allotments, whether attached to cottages or detached therefrom, or any land owned or hired on lease by any association or society registered under the Friendly Societies Acts, or under the Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, and actually let or in process of being let in allotments to members of such societies,"

and I hope that the Government will see their way to accept it. It is very simple and is proposed chiefly in the interests of many useful friendly societies which, in country districts, have acquired or are acquiring land for the purpose of letting it out in allotments to their members. One of my friends who represents a Division of Yorkshire tells me that in several parts of that county there are friendly and co-operative societies—especially in the larger towns—which have hired land some distance outside their district, and have used it for allotments with a view to providing vegetables and other produce for the consumption of their own members. I hope that the Government will accept the principle of this clause, and will either agree to it as I have framed it or accept the Amendment which, as an alternative, I am prepared to move, on Report, to Sub-section 6, of Clause 3, which tends in the same direction. It is not only highly desirable to protect the existing interests of allotment holders who may have improved their holdings, but, one of the objects of this Bill being to encourage voluntary effort for the provision of land, so far as possible, I think it is most desirable to protect such experiments, and to leave societies such as I have mentioned, and to exclude them from compulsory purchase.

Clause (Exclusion of labourers' allotments, &c., from compulsory purchase,)—(*Mr. Channing,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): Sir, I cannot conceive that any Sanitary Authority would ever desire to purchase compulsorily allotments of this kind provided that they were let in accordance with the provisions of the Bill at reasonable rents. But I do not think it would do to exclude all such lands from the operation of the Bill, because it might be that they were the most desirable contiguous to the neighbourhood, and they might be let at rents in excess of their agricultural value, and in such case I do not think it would be in the public interest to absolutely debar the Sanitary Authority from purchasing them.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Clause (Costs to be awarded in certain cases,)

"Where any Bill for confirming a Provisional Order authorising an improvement scheme is referred to a Committee of either House of Parliament upon the petition of any person opposing such Bill, the Committee shall take into consideration the circumstances under which such opposition is made to the Bill, and whether such opposition was or was not justified by the circumstances, and shall award costs accordingly to be paid by the promoters or the opponents of the Bill, as the Committee may think just.

"Any costs under this section may be taxed and recovered in the manner in which costs may be taxed and recovered under the twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth Victoria, chapter twenty-seven.

"The decision of the majority of the Members of the Committee for the time being present and voting on any question under this section shall be deemed to be the decision of the Committee."

(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre,*) *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Clause be read a second time," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *added.*

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne), in moving the following clause:—

"Upon any scheme for providing common pasture being proposed, an inquiry shall be made as to what lands, if any, within the parish or district were formerly common lands, and when, and under what conditions, and upon what terms they have been enclosed. And such lands shall be, in the first instance, selected in preference to other lands for the purposes of such scheme of common pasture. And the said lands shall be taken at a valuation not exceeding the price at which it may be ascertained that the same were valued at the date of their inclosure, deducting therefrom the amount of compensation money, if any, paid at the time to the parties interested therein; or, if such previous valuation be not ascertainable, then the said lands shall be taken for such scheme as aforesaid at the current market value for agricultural land in the said district, without any addition thereto for severance or otherwise,"

said: I put this clause on the Paper in order to carry out what the Government have declared to be their intention. On a recent occasion the right hon. Gentleman explained that in making provision for establishing a common pasture it was the desire of the Government to return to the system, the ancient system of this country under which there was a large acreage of common land. My contention is that if the Government really propose to return to the old system, they should do so in a thorough manner, and not in a half-hearted way. I therefore suggest that in returning to the ancient system they should endeavour to make restitution for the spoliation of common lands which Reports of Select Committee has proved to have taken place. I desire to call attention for one moment to the facts of this case. I do not hesitate to call it robbery of the poor in the matter of depriving them of their common lands. [*Interruption.*] Hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to be impatient, but I may remind them that I have not spoken yet this evening in the debate on the provisions of this Bill, I propose to occupy a short time, and I hope they will not interrupt me. I will not ask the Committee to go farther back than 1845 in order to ascertain how the lands of the poor have been taken away from them by rich landlords by means of Enclosure Acts. A Committee reported on the working of those Acts in 1869, it being appointed to consider how far the provisions relating to the labouring poor were being carried out, and whether, in order to properly protect the public interest, the Act required amending in the matter of the provision of spaces for recreation and for allotments for the labouring poor. In the course of the inquiry by that Committee, it was ascertained that out of 368,000 acres subject to these special provisions only 2,223 had been sub-let for playgrounds, and 1,742 for allotments. I think that is a sufficient condemnation of the conduct of the landlords and a sufficient refutation of the views we have heard expressed about the generosity of the landowners in giving allotments. It was also proved that none but agriculturists were allowed under the title of "the labouring poor." Upon 89,791 acres enclosed no allotments had been made at all. The noble Lord who had the Bill of 1845 in charge, said, in in moving its second reading, that in 19 out of 20 cases the conditions of enclosure neglected to secure the rights of the poor. I have, in my hand, a well-known volume of essays by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre), in which he sums up the operation of the enclosure. He says that though the provision was made to guard public interests, in practical working the Acts were detrimental to the interests of the labouring people.—[*Interruption.*] Well if I am to be interrupted——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

MR. CONYBEARE: The right hon. Gentleman continues—No regard is had to the interests of the public. He adds—

> "Commons were enclosed which were in no way suitable for cultivation, and which, in their natural state, were of far greater value to the population, many being within easy reach of a large proportion of the population."

I have quoted this statement by a high authority in order to show the enormous quantities of public lands in this country which have been deliberately taken away from poor people, and diverted to the interests and uses and wealth of rich and powerful landlords. Now, that is the charge which we make against the landowning class, and I challenge them to disprove it if they possibly can. That being the state of things, I ask the Government, when they talk of returning to the ancient order of things, not to be half-hearted about it, but in order to carry out the policy of relieving the ratepayers of the expense which the Bill may impose on them to see whether they cannot, by restoring to the public some, at least, of that land which has been stolen from them in past times, secure for their Act a cheaper and more efficient working than they otherwise could. Therefore, I propose that where any scheme is undertaken for providing common pastures, an inquiry shall be held as to what common lands have been in the past taken away, upon what terms, and under what conditions. I do not think that any injustice can be done by this, but to make sure it is not, I propose that such lands should be taken at a price not exceeding their ascertained value at the time of enclosure. That is a very simple proposal. Hon. Members opposite may meet it by declaring that it is a policy of confiscation, of spoliation. I can only reply that the object is to restore to the public that which has been taken from them by confiscation and by spoliation in the past. There is embodied in the provision a policy of mutual concession. The Government, by accepting it, would relieve the ratepayers, and make their Bill more workable. I shall consider it my duty to press this matter to a Division.

Clause 1 (In providing common pasture, ancient common lands to be first selected,)—(*Mr. Conybeare,*)—*brought up,* and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): The hon. Member has told us it will be his duty to speak once in every debate on this Bill. [Mr. CONYBEARE: No.] Then I misunderstood the hon. Member. But I certainly think it is unfortunate he should have felt it his duty to speak at length on such a clause as this. He professes to have the interests of the labourers at heart; he says he wishes to simplify procedure to market cheap, and to remove every obstacle to the successful working of the Bill. How does he do so? He proposes, as a first step, that in every parish for which allotments are held, and where formerly there were common lands, an inquiry shall be held as to when and under what conditions the conversion took place. I should like to know how long such an inquiry would take; how the allotment question would come out of it; and how much the expense would be increased? Again, whether these lands are suitable or not, simply because of the fact that they have been enclosed, are to be taken in preference to other lands. In support of his contention, he read some passages out of a book by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford, which had not the slightest application to the matter, as he seemed to see, for he dropped the book very suddenly. It referred to rough land—land used for recreation purposes, and certainly not suitable for labourers' allotments. Then he proposes a further inquiry as to the prices at which it is to be bought. The clause is not one which could be of any service to the cause which hon. Members who desire to pass this Bill have at heart.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 31; Noes 118: Majority 87. [2.50 A.M.]

AYES

Abraham, W. (Limerick, W.)
Ballantine, W. H. W.
Biggar, J. G.
Burt, T.
Campbell, H.
Carew, J. L.
Channing, F. A.
Clancy, J. J.
Clark, Dr. G. B.
Cobb, H. P.
Conway, M.
Cossham, H.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Finucane, J.
Flynn, J. C.
Fuller, G. P.
Hayne, C. Seale-
Hunter, W. A.
Lawson, H. L. W.
M'Arthur, W. A.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, P.
O'Kelly, J.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Quinn, T.
Rowlands, J.
Sexton, T.
Stack, J.
Stewart, H.
Tanner, C. K.
Winterbotham, A. B.

TELLERS.

Conybeare, C. A V.
Kenny, M. J.

NOES.

Addison., J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Ambrose, W.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Anstruther, H. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bates, Sir E.
Beach, W. W. B.
Beadel, W. J.
Beresford, Lord C. W. de la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burghley, Lord
Caldwell, J.
Campbell, J. A.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Chamberlain, R.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Collings, J.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Courtney, L. H.
Dalrymple, Sir C.
Davenport, H. T.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elton, C. I.
Evelyn, W. J.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fellowes, A. F.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, General Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Giles, A.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Grimston, Viscount
Hall, C.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Holland, right hon. Sir H. T.
Hornby, W. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jackson, W. L.
Jarvis, A. W.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kimber, H.
King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lefevre, rt. hn. G. J. S.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Long, W. H.
Macdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
M'Laren, W. S. B-
Matthews, rt. hn. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Mayne, Admiral R. C.
Mills, hon. C. W.
Milvain, T.
Mowbray, R. G. C.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Parker, hon. F.
Pearce, Sir W.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Plunkett, hon. J. W.
Powell, F. S.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Reed, H. B.
Ritchie, rt. hn. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Round, J.
Selwin-Ibbetson, rt. hon. Sir H. J.
Selwyn, Captain C. W.
Sidebotham, J. W.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C.
Temple, Sir R.
Theobald, J.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tomlinson, W. E. M.
Vincent, C. E. H.
Watson, J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Webster, R. G.
Weymouth, Viscount
Whitmore, C. A.
Wood, N.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS.

Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

Clause 2 (Duty of sanitary authority to acquire land for allotments).

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): It will be in the recollection of hon. Members that an Amendment similar to that I am now about to move was rejected in Committee, but, as I think, and as I felt at the time, on a distinct misunderstanding of the words—namely, that the Amendment necessitated a public meeting under all circumstances—but the words did not necessitate such an inquiry under all circumstances, but only when the Sanitary Authority deemed that the representation was based on insufficient grounds. The object of my present Amendment is to secure that when it is suggested to them that the demand is based on insufficient grounds that they shall not reject it without holding an inquiry, and having the statements upon which the representation is made disproved. What I wish to test is whether the Government are really prepared to make the initiative steps really effective, or whether the initiative power of representation given to electors under the 2nd clause shall be without any weight whatever. As the clause at present stands it is worth nothing, the whole decision depends upon the state of mind of the Sanitary Authority; and what I want is that, if the Sanitary Authority refuses the application for allotments, that shall only be done after an inquiry has been held, and if the statements of the representation have been shown to be unreasonable. I hope the Government may accept it. When I moved it in Committee, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Sleaford Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) accepted the principle; but the Amendment itself was rejected because the right hon. Gentleman opposite misunderstood my meaning, and supposed it would necessitate an inquiry under all circumstances.

Amendment proposed,

In page 1, line 14, before the word "of," to insert the words, "unless the statements of such representations are proved to be without foundation, at an inquiry held by such authority, within such urban district, or such parish or." —(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. RITCHIE: What the hon. Gentleman wishes to provide is that every time a representation is made by six electors in the parish, or in such district, then this representation shall be taken to have been proved, and that such need exists, unless by inquiry the Sanitary Authority are satisfied that such representations are not based on fact. Yet the hon. Gentleman says he does not ask for a public inquiry. But I ask what other form of inquiry would be acceptable or possible where the onus would lie on the Sanitary Authority to prove that the representation was not a proper or right one?

Mr. CHANNING: I said I did not ask for it under all circumstances.

Mr. RITCHIE: The words are—

"Unless such representation is proved to be without foundation at an inquiry held by such sanitary authority,"

which clearly points out that it is their duty every time a representation is made by six electors to accept that as proof of fact, unless they hold an inquiry which of necessity must be public. Now, this is simply the old Amendment we discussed in Committee, and I showed then that it would simply tend to expense turmoil and trouble to introduce it, and the Goverment now, as then, cannot accept it.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in page 1, line 16, after the word "allotments" insert the words, "for the labouring population."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Sir WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston); I should like the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board to explain. Will this definition include small shopkeepers and other members of the community—what classes will be allowed to have allotments?

Mr. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): Before the right hon. Gentleman replies, let me point out that he is very considerably narrowing the scope of the Bill by introducing these words. The Bill itself makes no reference whatever to the labouring population.

Mr. RITCHIE: Yes; the very title.

Mr. HALLEY STEWART: The title does, and I have put down a proposal to amend that. But the main text of the Bill, irrespective of the title, makes no reference to the labouring population, and the reason I apprehend why such words were not inserted was because there was an objection to such a definition, because in many cases Sanitary Authorities might so construe the Bill that it should only apply to those actually engaged in daily labour. Now, there are many small shopkeepers who increase their income by the sale of the produce of an acre of land, and they might fairly be excluded by these words. If the right hon. Gentleman inserts this Amendment, I am convinced the effect will be to exclude many persons who would not be excluded were the Bill allowed to remain as it now stands. I hope he will not press the Amendment; if he does I shall certainly divide against it. The Bill was proposed as an auxiliary to persons who have some other scanty means of existence—say, holders of annuities of 7*s.* or 8*s.* a-week, those who receive an annuity from the Government, retired soldiers and such like, and shop assistants and clerks, who could not be classed as labourers. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not press it.

Mr. GEDGE (Stockport): I also would beg the right hon. Gentleman not to press the Amendment. Among the population of towns there is a growing need of allotments, and they would not come under the definition of labouring population, though the Bill would be just as much advantage to them.

Mr. RITCHIE: The hon. Member is mistaken in supposing there is nothing in the Bill having reference to the labouring classes; the Bill itself is instituted a Bill to afford facilities for affording allotments to the labouring classes; and, I may say at once, it was the intention of the Government in bringing in the Bill that it should be for the benefit of the labouring population, and in Committee, and throughout its progress, it has been discussed upon that supposition, every speaker bringing prominently to the front the fact that it is intended for the labouring classes. Though the object has been clearly defined in the title, it has been thought desirable to make the meaning clear in the text, and that is the intention by this Amendment. I know the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire (Mr. Halley Stewart) holds strong views on the question of land. I think I am not going beyond his views when I say he believes that every man born of woman has a claim to an allotment.

MR. HALLEY STEWART: A right.

MR. RITCHIE: I am not going to argue that now; it is much too long an argument to enter upon; but he will not be surprised if I say that I do not quite concur in his contention. But he will admit that the first class of people claiming consideration are the labouring classes. If you extend the principle beyond the working classes, then the effect will be that where suitable land is limited, you will, by the extension, prevent the very class you desire to have allotments from obtaining them. I do not wish to draw the limit too finely, and I have no doubt that within our limit the Sanitary Authority will exercise discretion; but what we wish to represent clearly and distinctly to the Sanitary Authority is, that the main aim and object of this Bill is to provide allotments for the labouring classes.

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): I am very glad that we have an opportunity now of knowing at last what the intention of the Government has been in regard to this Bill. I must say for myself—and, at the same time, I know I express the opinion of many Members on this side—that if I had had any idea that it was the intention from the first to exclude classes of men who have in our discussions been alluded to over and over again, I, and many of us, would have voted against the second reading of the Bill. I dare say the right hon. Gentleman is not aware how the Amendment he proposes to introduce into the Act, interpreted as it will be, let us not forget, in hostility to applicants by the Boards of Guardians, will tend to narrow the operation of the Act. I understand that in the Irish Act this was so constantly felt that other Acts had to be passed for interpretation purposes.

MR. RITCHIE: It is confined to agricultural labourers.

MR. COBB: My hon. Friend just now alluded to towns, and I know that in my Division, at Rugby, Kenilworth, Southam, Kineton, and other places—there are a number of men who cannot be said to belong to the labouring class who certainly are looking forward to having allotments—men of the class of small shopkeepers, clerks, and also shop-assistants and apprentices. There are all sorts of men in these positions of life in towns, and why should they not have allotments? We certainly contemplated that the Bill would give everyone the opportunity of getting an allotment; and, depend upon it, to do so would be a national benefit, and would tend to increase the wealth of the country. I shall certainly join with the hon. Member for the Spalding Division of Lincolnshire in opposing the Amendment.

MR. WINTERBOTHAM (Gloucester, Cirencester): I am very glad indeed that we shall be able to show the country how this small, this miserable Bill is being whittled down. Had this Amendment been proposed in "another place," I should not have been surprised, and I am very glad the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge) has, from the other side of the House, entered his protest against it. This Bill has been looked forward to by dwellers in towns and large villages as a distinct benefit to them. There are large numbers of small tradesmen, clerks, foremen, mechanics, people who could not be classed among the labouring population, to whom this Bill would undoubtedly be a great benefit, and you are going to shut them out at the last moment by putting in the words "labouring population to be interpreted by Boards of Guardians." I hope, at all events, that Members opposite who represent constituencies where they know there is a demand for allotments, who have had the fact brought home to their minds—with some of them the process has taken considerable time—will join with us in a protest against this Amendment.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): It is very easy, of course, to fan this into a Party discussion, and to make platform speeches; but let me bring back the mind of the House to the real question. When the hon. Member says that small shopkeepers will be excluded, as not being included in the labouring population, that does not follow, because it very often happens that a man does labouring work while his wife keeps the shop. I do not suppose that persons who work in mills, foremen, and clerks, will be necessarily excluded.

Mr. HALLEY STEWART: Will you make it "working classes?"

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: That depends upon what definition you attach to the expression. When hon. Members speak of the large number of persons who may be excluded, they forget the large number of the class to whom the Bill is specially directed, and the limited supply of land for the purpose.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): It is surprising how this Government always seems to wobble when it sets its hand to anything for the good of the people. This Amendment, in my opinion, takes away half the value of the Bill, and in my own constituency will exclude mechanics from the benefit of the Bill.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: Mechanics will be included.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM: It is not the opinion of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General that we have to rely on; it is the interpretation Boards of Guardians will put upon the clause, and certainly I think that, in many cases, they will hold that mechanics are excluded. Therefore, I say, the Amendment will, to a large extent, destroy the value of the Bill. I hope the Government will reconsider their position. I certainly shall not shrink from giving the people my opinion of it.

Commander BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): I should be sorry if small shopkeepers were shut out from availing themselves of the Bill; but I do not quite see why it should be open to the whole population of towns, nor do I see how the Bill would be for their advantage generally.

Mr. COBB: Why not?

Commander BETHELL: If it were possible to draw a distinction among them I should be glad; but, under the circumstances, I am bound to say I think the Government are quite right in retaining the title of the Bill, and applying it to the labouring population, and if there is a Division I shall vote with the Government.

Mr. CHANNING: I would ask the hon. and learned Gentleman would Boards of Guardians interpret the measure as extending to shoemakers?

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: They would be included, of course.

Mr. CHANNING: Well, that may be the desire of the Government; but they must admit the words of the clause will be somewhat ambiguous. They seem to have created a wrong impression among hon. Members, and I do not see that they will be more clear to Boards of Guardians.

Mr. M'LAREN (Cheshire, Crewe): I really cannot see the use of putting in the words. If they are to include artizans and shopkeepers, even though the wife keeps the shop in her own name, if they are to include all who work for weekly or daily wages, what is the use of the words? If nobody is to be kept out by them, we might as well not insert the words.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 103; Noes 39: Majority 64.—(Div. List, No. 454.) [3.15 A.M.]

On the Motion of Mr. Ritchie, the following Amendment made:—In page 1, line 25, after persons, insert "belonging to the labouring classes."

Mr. RITCHIE, in moving the following Amendment:—In page 1, line 28, after "that," insert "in the opinion of the Sanitary Authority," said: I propose this to carry out a pledge I gave to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), who said if the Sanitary Authority acquired land and did not recoup themselves for the outlay certain irate ratepayers might get a mandamus against them.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 4, insert the following Sub-section:—"For the purpose of this section, the expression 'reasonable rent' means the rent, exclusive of rates, taxes, and tithe-rent charge, which a person taking an allotment might reasonably be expected to pay, taking one year with another, to a landlord for an allotment, having regard to the value of agricultural and garden land in the neighbourhood, to the extent and situation of the allotment, to the expenses of adapting the land to the purposes of the allotment, and to the repairs and other outgoings payable by the landlord, and to the cost and risk of collecting the rents of and otherwise managing allotments." — (*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): This sub-section reads, deprived of its surplusage, this way—

"The definition 'reasonable rent' is rent which a person taking an allotment might reasonably be expected to pay to a landlord for the allotment."

Now, what a person might reasonably be expected to pay to a landlord for an allotment is the rent usually payable and demanded for the allotment. Now, we all of us know that such rent is sometimes two, three, and four times more than that paid for agricultural purposes. Therefore, I propose, in the first instance, to amend the sub-section by leaving out the words "for an allotment," after the word "landlord;" and I claim the support of the right hon. Gentlemen the President of the Local Government Board, and this because he objected just now, in reference to friendly societies, that they might be letting land at a very high rent, and it was desirable that the Sanitary Authority should have the power of taking land for friendly societies under these circumstances. I apprehend that the right hon. Gentleman does not wish that holders of allotments should pay more than the agricultural value.

Amendment proposed to proposed new Sub-section, in line 4, to leave out the words "for an allotment."—(*Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the sub-section."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Ritchie) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): It is quite clear these words must remain in. We are now dealing with a person who has got possession of an allotment, and the question arises, whether he has got possession of that allotment at a reasonable rent. We have endeavoured to carry out our intention and define what a reasonable rent is, and we provide for regard being paid to similar rents in the neighbourhood.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston): This sub-section is introduced in connection with an Amendment of mine in Committee, I believe; but I cannot congratulate the right. hon. Gentleman on the simplicity or elegance of the definition he has introduced. I think it might have been much briefer and much more effective than it is. I would point out that there may be a Board of Guardians which is an unwilling Local Authority in the matter, and yet the Bill has the fault of leaving it practically to the Board of Guardians to say whether the price the labourers are asked to pay or are paying for an allotment is reasonable or not. It would be much better to fix the thing at once, and to say that the land must be paid for at the same rate as similar land in the neighbourhood. There are scores of cases in different parts of the country where allotments are being let for £10 an acre. Therefore, the Act will come into operation in places where the price of an allotment is double or more than double the price of agricultural land. Surely, that is not the idea of a reasonable rent which you want to put into the minds of the Local Authorities, and it is because we do not want to put such an idea into their minds that we need a provision of this kind. The definition which I have myself drawn up expresses the matter more clearly, I think. My preference for that definition may, perhaps, be due to pardonable paternal pride; but, at all events, it seems to me to state clearly what is wanted. My suggestion is that the definition should be in this form—

"For the purpose of this section, the expression 'reasonable rent' means the average rent of land of the same quality and in the same parish, exclusive of rates, taxes, tithe rent-charge, and outgoings specially necessitated by the formation and management of allotments."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir RICHARD WEBSTER) (Isle of Wight): I should not imagine that my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board would have the smallest objection to leaving this definition out altogether, if the House wishes. We were pressed to give some definition, and it was pointed out that if the Local Authorities were called on to pay too high a rent they would not be obtaining the allotments in the manner desired by the House. I must say that it is rather strange that no hon. Gentleman has attempted to put a definition on the Paper.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): A definition was proposed in Committee.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: The hon. Baronet the Member for the Ilkeston Division of Derby (Sir Walter Foster) has kept his in his pocket, but he has not abstained from criticizing other people's proposals. It must be remembered that some of the allotments will be let from year to year, and some for longer periods. The Amendment makes no provision, however, for meeting differences in tenure. Of course, the Local Authorities, in considering the price to be given for land, would take into account the value of land of similar quality in the neighbourhood. The hon. Member has forgotten, when he talks about the prices paid for allotments in country districts, that when a landlord lets land for allotments he pays all the rates, taxes, and tithes. This being the case, of course the rent paid for allotments would average a higher amount than that paid for ordinary agricultural land. I submit that my right hon. Friend the President of the Local Government Board has shown that this definition gives a fair standard of the rent to be paid for allotments, and that it is a distinct fulfilment of our pledge.

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I wish the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would tell us whether he is or is not aware that the rent paid to landlords for allotments is generally double that paid for agricultural land. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, I speak within my own knowledge when I say that I could take him into Lincolnshire and show him allotment land of exactly the same quality, in exactly the same place, and able to produce equally good crops under the same cultivation as the agricultural land surrounding it, and yet which is let at double the price of the neighbouring agricultural land. It is a standing grievance in our agricultural constituencies that the landlord does make the labourer pay for allotments double and sometimes treble that which is payable for agricultural land. We think we are asking a very small concession from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board when we request him to omit the words "for an allotment." If the landowner obtains the average value of agricultural land in the neighbourhood, he surely ought to be content. I hope that this House, or rather the minority in this House, will place on record its regret that the right hon. Gentleman should assist the landlords to get double the ordinary rent for land of this character.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I do not know whether the hon. and learned Attorney General will agree with me; but I think it might save time if we accepted the Amendment, because it really makes no difference whatever to the definition. According to the Bill itself, the expression "reasonable rent" means a rent which a person taking an allotment might reasonably be taken to pay for an allotment.

MR. RITCHIE: We will take out the words.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in line 5 of the new sub-section, to leave out the words, "agricultural and garden," and insert the word "similar."

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Sub-section," put and *negatived.*

Question, "That the word 'similar' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Question proposed, "That the Sub-section, as amended, be there inserted."

MR. CHANNING: As the hon. and learned Attorney General stated that no suggestion had come from this side of the House as to the definition of "reasonable rent," I wish to call attention to the fact that I, myself, moved an Amendment on the subject in Committee, to insert a practical definition of the "reasonable rent of allotments," and that at that stage the Attorney General argued in reply that no definition whatever was required, and that the clause was quite good enough as it stood. The

Government have now accepted the principle which I then insisted on.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 3 (Acquisition of land for the purpose of this Act).

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 17, after the word "arbitrator," to insert the words "notwithstanding anything in the said Acts shall determine the amount of the costs and."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted" put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 33, to leave out the word "or."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question, "That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 33, to leave out the words "attached to or," and insert the words "or other land."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'or other land' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. HALLEY STEWART: I beg to move that the words "or may be" be omitted from the 36th line. At present the clause relates to the property of a Railway Company which is required or may be required for the purposes of their undertaking. No doubt the engineer of every Railway Company in this Kingdom expects that every bit of land he may have in his possession will at some time or other be likely to be used for the purposes of the undertaking; but I do not think we ought to take into account the problematical requirements of a distant future.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 36, to leave out the words "or may be."—(*Mr. Halley Stewart.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I must point out to the hon. Member that these words are necessary. I think the hon. Gentleman forgets that unless land is actually required for railway purposes it becomes surplus land, and that at the expiration of 10 years it will either vest in the adjoining owner or will have to be sold. It would, however, certainly be a wrong thing to say that because land is not actually *de facto* at the moment required for the purposes of the railway it may be used for the purposes of this Act. These words are therefore necessary.

MR. F. S. POWELL (Wigan): I am bound to say that the words are still more necessary in the case of canals, as I have reason to know from my experience of canals.

MR. HALLEY STEWART: I will withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in page 4, to leave out Sub-section (8), and insert—"The County Authority shall not make a Provisional Order for purchasing any right to coal or metalliferous ore."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (8) stand part of the Clause."

MR. COBB (Warwick, S.E., Rugby): May I ask whether this Amendment means that, if a Sanitary Authority has purchased land, and it shall be afterwards found that coal or ore is under that land, the purchase shall not be taken to include the minerals?

MR. RITCHIE: It is really intended to prevent any claim arising after the purchase money has been settled. No question can arise if no power is taken to purchase.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Words *inserted.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Improvement and adaptation of land for allotments).

Amendment proposed,

In page 4, line 13, after "fit," to add the words "and may from time to time do such things as may be necessary for maintaining such drains, fences, approaches, and roads, or otherwise, for maintaining the allotments in a proper condition."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Management of allotments).

Amendment proposed, in page 4, line 36, at the beginning of the line, to insert the words "subject to the provisions of this Act."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

On the Motion of Mr. RITCHIE, the following Amendments made:—In page 4, line 37, to leave out "local," and insert "allotment;" line 38, to leave out "local," and insert "allotment;" page 5, line 1, to leave out "local," and insert "allotment;" and in line 3, to leave out "local" and insert "allotment."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Provisions as to letting and use of allotments).

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 12, after "loss," to insert "but in calculating such loss any expenses incurred in an unsuccessful attempt to acquire land for allotments shall be excluded."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 5, line 20, after the word "allotments" to insert the words, "which are let."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. SEALE-HAYNE (Devon, Ashburton): I beg to move in the 6th clause to insert after "accordingly" the words—

"Provided always, that, for the purposes of the Parliamentary franchise and the municipal and all other local franchises the tenants shall be deemed to be the occupiers, and such rates to have been paid by them, notwithstanding the provisions hereinbefore contained."

I understand that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ritchie) is going to accept this Amendment; and I am confident he does not wish that the Bill should have a disfranchising effect.

Amendment proposed,

In page 5, line 26, after the word "accordingly," to insert the words "Provided always, that, for the purposes of the Parliamentary franchise, and the municipal and all other local franchises, the tenants shall be deemed to be the occupiers, and such rates to have been paid by them, notwithstanding the provisions hereinbefore contained." — (*Mr. Seale-Hayne.*)

Question, proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. RITCHIE: We do not think that there is any necessity, Sir, for this Amendment; but we will accept it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 6, line 8, to leave out from "same" to the last "and" in line 28, inclusive.—(*Mr Ritchie.*)

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 6, at end, to add the following subsection:—"(6.) A tenant of an allotment may, before the expiration of his tenancy, remove any fruit and other trees and bushes planted or acquired by him, for which he has no claim for compensation."

Question, "That that sub-section be be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Recovery of rent, and possession of allotments).

On the Motion of Mr. RITCHIE, the following Amendments made:—In page 6, line 20, before "thereof," insert "of the tenancy;" line 24, leave out from "parish" to end of line 25, and insert "leave at his last known place of abode in the district or parish, or fix in some conspicuous manner on the allotment;" line 29, leave out "or the incoming tenant," and insert "in default of agreement between the incoming and outgoing tenant;" and, in line 33, leave out "allotment wardens," and insert "sanitary authority."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (Expenses and receipts).

On the Motion of Mr. RITCHIE, the following Amendments made:—In page 7, line 2, after "Act," insert "including allowances to officers of such authority for duties under this Act;" line 40, leave out "local," and insert "allotment;" line 41, leave out "appointed by them," and insert "and other persons acting under this Act;" page 8, line 2, leave out "local," and insert "allotment;" and after "managers," insert "and other persons."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 9 to 11, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 12 (As to combination of parishes and contributory places).

On the Motion of Mr. RITCHIE the following Amendment made—

In page 10, line 21, at end, add "where such population is not specified in such census, then in the county in which the largest part of the area of such district or parish is situated, and any doubt which may arise under this section as to the county shall be determined by the Local Government Board."

MR. RITCHIE: I have now a verbal Amendment to propose—namely, at the end of the clause to add these words—

"Two or more parishes immediately adjoining each other may make a representation under this Act, and the sanitary authority of a rural district may take proceedings in respect of such parishes as if they were a single parish."

This is to provide for very small parishes.

Amendment proposed, Clause 12, at end, to add—

"Two or more parishes immediately adjoining each other may make a representation under this Act, and the sanitary authority of a rural district may take proceedings in respect of such parishes as if they were a single parish."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 13 (Register of tenancies).

MR. RITCHIE: I now move the Amendment, of which I gave Notice earlier in the evening, to come in at the end of Clause 13.

Amendment proposed, at end of Clause, to add—

"And within one month after the 25th day of March in every year shall cause an annual statement, showing the receipts and expenditure under this Act in respect of the year ending on that day, and their liabilities outstanding on that day, to be deposited at some convenient place in the district, if urban, or the parish to which the statement relates, if the district is rural, and any ratepayer may, without fee, inspect and take copies of such statement."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Question, "That those words be there added," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 14 (Definition of county authority).

Amendment proposed, in page 10, to leave out lines 39, 40, and 41.

Question proposed, "That the lines proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 15 (Definitions).

Amendment proposed, in page 11, line 2, after "a," to insert "field."

Question proposed, "That that word be there inserted."

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I think it desirable that a question should be asked as to the exact meaning of this Amendment, because at first sight it certainly has a very restrictive aspect.

MR. RITCHIE: When this Bill was going through Committee a question was raised as to whether the Sanitary Authority ought to have power to obtain land for the purpose of adding to the land attached to a cottage, and the Committee, I think, without a Division, agreed that that was not the intention of the Bill, but that the intention was that where there was a strip of garden ground in the immediate proximity of a cottage this should not be excluded from the definition of an allotment.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 11, line 10, to leave out the first "and," and, after "arable," to insert "and other land."

Question, "That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I shall not divide the House upon the Amendment I have placed on the Paper, to leave out "for the labouring classes" in the title, because that question has been already decided; but I must express my regret that this Bill, by that decision, is narrower than when it was introduced.

MR. RITCHIE: Perhaps the House will allow the Bill to be read a third time.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Ritchie,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

DEEDS OF ARRANGEMENT (No. 2) BILL. [*Lords*]—[BILL 381.]

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Mr. Speaker, we have now arrived at a late hour of the evening, and I would certainly appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) not to proceed with this Motion now. I had Notice of opposition to this Bill, and several of my hon. Friends, who could not wait up till this hour, have now gone away. I have few words to say; but I sincerely hope the First Lord of the Treasury will not press this Bill forward now. There is no opposition beyond opposition of a technical nature to the measure, and I trust therefore that it can be deferred until to-morrow. I have waited here for the purpose of putting the matter to the right hon. Gentleman in a fair way. I trust I have behaved in a fair spirit, and that he will reciprocate it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): I hope we shall be allowed to take this Bill. It is only to be taken formally.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I must second my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) in the matter of putting the second reading aside for the present.

Mr. SPEAKER: This is not the second reading, but going into Committee.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I thought it was the other Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Dr. TANNER: I rise to move, Sir, that you report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Dr. Tanner.*)

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: May I remind the hon. Member that this Bill is absolutely unopposed. Nobody has suggested any Amendment. I do not wish to take anything which the hon. Member desires to have discussed; but we are anxious to get some of these Bills off the Order Book.

Dr. TANNER: May I also suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that I am not speaking on behalf of myself. I am speaking for hon. Members not now here, who wished to discuss this Bill. I think it is too late an hour to proceed with this Bill. I have not done anything of the character of persistent opposition, and I therefore hope the hon. and learned Gentleman, in a spirit of common sense, will allow Progress to be reported.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Dr. Tanner

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

SHERIFFS (CONSOLIDATION) BILL.

[*Lords*]—[Bill 262.]

(*Mr. Solicitor General.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I want to know how long the Government intend to go on with these things? An important question will arise in connection with this measure.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): We only want to get the Speaker out of the Chair.

Mr. CONYBEARE: And we want to discuss the principles of this Bill, which is an exceedingly important one. I protest against your taking it at 4 o'clock in the morning. I shall therefore move the adjournment of the debate.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): I will second this.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

The House *divided*:—Ayes 25; Noes 79: Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 455.) [4.5 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I think it is time I interposed. My experience is that very frequently in this Session useful Bills of a non-contentious character have been defeated and delayed simply because the Government have not cared to use their influence with their own supporters to get the blocks removed. Now, I am not disposed to allow progress to be made with this Bill. Therefore I move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, E.): I second that.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: I can scarcely think that the hon. Member for West Belfast will not adhere to an arrangement which has been come to with reference to certain formal Bills. I made a distinct arrangement with the

Representatives of his Party that, upon certain terms which I will strictly adhere to, those Bills which are purely formal should be allowed to pass. I hope the hon. Gentleman will allow it to proceed. I have already undertaken that we will do no more than get the formal step of moving the Speaker out of the Chair. I cannot think the hon. Member will be a party to breaking a bargain which I have made with another Member of his Party——

MR. SEXTON: I am not aware of any such arrangement.

MR. CONYBEARE: Although our Friends from Ireland may assent, they are not the only persons in this House to be considered. There are a good many of us on this side of the House know nothing of any such arrangement. I have a strong objection to going on with this Bill, and that objection applies still more strongly to the Coroners' Bill, which I suppose will follow——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member cannot discuss another Bill.

MR. CONYBEARE: I was only going to say that, as far as I have been able to examine these Bills, they are very imperfect attempts at codification. I am not going now to point out in what particulars; but I should prefer that these Bills should be thrown over to another Session in order that they may be properly considered.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CLARKE) (Plymouth): I hope that the objection will not be persisted in. The hon. Member talked of this as a Codification Bill—it is not that.

MR. CONYBEARE: No, it is a Consolidation Bill.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: It is a Consolidation Bill which puts into one Statute 40 or 50 measures on the Statute Book, and it will enable the revised edition of the Statute to be issued in a cheaper and more convenient form. When I moved the second reading, I said that the Committee stage should be put off for a considerable time in order that it might be fully considered. It has been fully considered by those interested in the matter. There has not been one objection to any single clause. I do hope, therefore, that the hon. Member will withdraw his objection.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): The hon. and learned Attorney General (Sir Richard Webster) alluded to an arrangement having been made with the Irish Members. I am an Irish Member and I heard nothing of it, and the Irish Members here present are prepared to make a similar statement. The hon. and learned Solicitor General says this Bill is of a non-contentious character. Well, practically, the Bill of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) is non-contentious. Is there any guarantee that that Bill will not be blocked in the future?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member cannot discuss that.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I must join issue with the remarks which fell from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for England. He stated that some agreement had been entered into. Why, Sir, in pursuit of my Parliamentary functions I tried to prevent this Bill making any further progress. I think we ought to have reciprocity—some proof of that mutual affection which should exist between both sides of this House, from the responsible Minister of the Crown downwards. But, unfortunately, we have failed in that. Mr. Speaker, in the course of last week I tried to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury the fact that if he would only let our one little ewe lamb grow up and become——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is trifling with the House.

DR. TANNER: May I be permitted to say, in as few words as I can, that I tried to enter into some arrangement with the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, and I succeeded for a time, for he did not try to get three or four stages of different Bills.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member's remarks are irrelevent.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): It is now 20 minutes past 4 o'clock. We have been here since half-past 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon. It is time we went home to our beds. Sir, I entertain a constitutional objection and a rooted dislike to legislating at this hour of the morning. The hon. and learned Attorney General says that this Bill is a non-contentious one. So are our Bills non-contentious, and especially that of my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast. I trust that he will persist in his Motion for the adjournment of the House. It is an intolerable condition of things, Sir, that hon. Members should be kept here till 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock in the morning, and have to go home at such disreputable hours — hours which do not add to the dignity of the House or of Parliament, and which jeopardize health and everything that makes life worth living for. My hon. Friend's Motion is one which should recommend itself to all sides of the House, to all hon. Members, whether Conservatives, Liberals, or Nationalists. I say, Sir, it is an intolerable state of things that, after endeavouring to do our duty to the best of our ability evening after evening we should be obliged by the perversity and mismanagement of hon. Members opposite to remain here so late.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I will ask to be allowed to intervene for one moment. It is perfectly impossible for anyone with a due regard for the character and reputation of this House to enter upon a contest of this character at this time of the morning. I deeply regret that hon. Gentlemen have thought it right to prevent this stage being taken. The Bill is not blocked, and it certainly was understood that it would be allowed to pass this stage without opposition. I will not refer to what has occurred; but I repeat it is undesirable to enter into a contest of this character, a contest which cannot add to the reputation of the House—deeply as that reputation has been lowered by hon. Members opposite.

DR. CLARK: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman does not object to the adjournment of the House?

MR. W. H. SMITH: No; I agree to the adjournment of the House.

DR. CLARK: I understand that the Motion before the House is that it now adjourn. Unless that is withdrawn we adjourn the House altogether. Does the right hon. Gentleman undertake not to take any more Business to-night?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I must appeal again to the House. I have said I am anxious to consult the feelings and wishes of hon. Members, especially those from Scotland. If it is not their desire to proceed with the Scotch measures on the Paper, it is not my wish to insist on taking them at this late hour. I will push no measure on the House at this period of the night.

MR. SEXTON: I perceive that some hon. Members desire to proceed, so I withdraw my Motion. But I repeat that I have not heard a syllable of any arrangement with reference to these Bills.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 358.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 29th August.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 6 (Duties and powers of school board with respect to technical schools).

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I understood from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury that he was not going to take any more contentious Business to-night. I beg to move that you now report Progress and ask leave to sit again. There are many contentious matters in this Bill. We do not want another hour's debate; and I think after the understanding we have had with the right hon. Gentleman it would be scarcely possible to take this to-night.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress and ask leave to sit again."—(*Dr. Clark.*)

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I do not think there is a single Amendment to this Bill in the name of the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark), thus showing the extent of his interest in the matter. I hope we will now proceed to Business.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): It is an entire delusion on the part of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lanarkshire (Mr. Mason) to say that because he puts down no Amendment an hon. Member takes no interest in a Bill. If the Bill is now taken, I shall have to move some Amendments in the name of an hon. Member who has left the House, thinking the Bill would not be taken to-night. There are three very important points in regard to this Bill which have not yet been discussed. This is an example of scamped legislation; the Bill was not properly discussed on the second reading, or on going into Supply.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

MOTION.

—o—

VACANT GROUNDS (NUISANCES PREVENTION) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Lawson, Bill to prevent Nuisances on Vacant Grounds and disused Burial Grounds, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Lawson, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Howell, and Mr. James Rowlands.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 388.]

House adjourned at half after Four o'clock in the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 6*th September*, 1887.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Coal Mines, &c. Regulation* (251); Labourers' Allotments* (252); Charity Commissioners (Officers)* (254); Tramways (War Department* (255).

Second Reading—Duration of Speeches in Parliament (97), *negatived.*

Committee — Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment (No. 3)* (237-256).

Report—Metropolitan Police* (242).

Third Reading—Conveyancing (Scotland) Acts Amendment* (233); Savings Banks and Government Annuities* (243); Sheriff of Lanarkshire* (244), and *passed.*

DURATION OF SPEECHES IN PARLIAMENT BILL.—(No. 97.)

(*The Lord Denman.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD DENMAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that its object was to limit speeches in Parliament, except in certain cases, to a quarter of an hour. He would state the reason which had induced him to bring forward this seemingly rash and adventurous Bill. It was that he had lately noticed a marked difference between the progress made with the business at the meetings of the International Convention for the Diminution of Intemperance held in Brussels, and in the Westminster Town Hall. In Brussels, where there was no limit to speeches, the proceedings lasted seven days; but in Westminster, where the Chairman had the power of shortening speeches—and by regulation papers to be read were limited to a quarter of an hour, and speeches to five minutes—the result was that the whole business was transacted in one day. The mere notice to anyone that his speech had lasted a certain time need no be considered offensive, and Dr. Cameron, M.P., who was in the chair, had to check a Chevalier who, in reading his paper, exceeded his allotted time. It seemed hardly necessary in their Lordships' House to prescribe any limit to speeches; but he must be allowed to say that in the debate on the Irish Land Bill his Grace the Duke of Argyll—whom he regretted not to see in his place to hear his observations—as a Liberal Unionist, protracted the debate to a great extent by referring to matters not before their Lordships. In that House they knew nothing of Liberal Unionists. Their Lordships only knew that there was a Union between Great Britain and Ireland, and until it was legitimately repealed it was the law of the land. A noble Earl (the Earl of Dunraven) on the Conservative side of the House also delivered, a short time ago, a speech on the defects of our armaments. It might have been made shorter by a reference to documents. A noble Earl who sat on the Cross Benches (the Earl of Wemyss) had been shown up by a humorous reporter in this House with the remark that he referred to every topic under Heaven. There could be no doubt, however, that lately the noble Earl's speech was above an hour in length, and at the end of it he alluded to Mr. Bradlaugh, as if the hon. Member had control over the legislation of this country. He (Lord Denman) ventured to think that reference was clearly surplusage. He wished to speak of his noble Friend with respect. He knew that the noble Earl was a very good landlord, however much he might be attacked by individuals. In the House of Commons, Mr. Caine had, on the Rules of Procedure, made an attempt to limit the duration of speeches, giving a preference to Privy Councillors. If the hon. Member brought forward his Rule again, he (Lord Denman) hoped he would consider whether the duration of all speeches might not be shortened considerably. He had been stopped himself at the Diocesan Conference at Nottingham, and he would always be glad to abridge any remarks he might have to make by reference to documents and other publications. He would move that the Bill be now read a second time, and that if their Lordships could not read it a second time, that they would reject the measure.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY): The noble Lord cannot move an alternative as well.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Denman.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS) said, he was very much interested in the speech of the noble Lord, and he concurred with him in his desire to limit the duration of speeches in Parliament. He did not think, however, that the speeches in their Lordships' House were too long, although, no doubt, a good deal of time was consumed. He thought it was hardly wise that legislation of this character should be initiated in that House. If it were necessary to bring anything of the kind forward, the other House was the place where it should be initiated. He would advise the noble Lord not to press his measure forward. He would move that it be read a second time that day three months.

LORD DENMAN: Move the rejection, too, please.

Amendment *moved*, to leave out ("now") and add at the end of the motion ("this day three months").—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

On Question, That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Motion, *resolved* in the *negative*.

Bill to be read 2ª *this day three months.*

House adjourned at Five o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter
past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 6th September, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Votes 21, 22; CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART, Votes 10 to 12; CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES, Votes 5, 6, 8; CLASS VI. NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES, Votes 1 to 4, 7, 8; CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS, Votes 1, 2; REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, Votes I, II.; CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Vote 7; CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART; CLASS VII. MISCELLANEOUS.

Resolutions [September 5] *reported.*

Postponed Resolution [September 2] *agreed to.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Committee*—Deeds of Arrangement (No. 2) * [381]—R.P.; Bankruptcy (Discharge and Closure) * [327]—R.P.

Committee—Report—Merchant Shipping (Miscellaneous) * [348].

QUESTIONS.

IMMIGRATION OF DESTITUTE ALIENS, 1886.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he could give a Return of the number of Destitute Aliens who arrived in the ports of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in the year 1886?

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth) (who replied) said: The Board of Trade are unable to give the number of destitute aliens who arrived in the ports of the United Kingdom in 1886, as the Passenger Acts, 1854 and 1863, under which the Immigration Returns are made to the Board of Trade, do not require the condition of the immigrants to be stated, and do not require Returns to be made of persons coming from places in Europe or on the Coasts of the Mediterranean.

UNITED STATES—REFUSAL OF DESTITUTE ALIENS.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether any inquiry will be made into the cases of nine persons, said to be foreigners, who, with others, have been recently sent back to the United Kingdom by the United States as destitute aliens, in order to ascertain their respective nationalities, and with a view to their being returned by the United Kingdom to their own countries respectively?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Of the nine foreigners referred to by the hon. and gallant Member, eight were said to be of German nationality, and one was said to be of Swedish nationality. The Board of Trade have no machinery at their disposal for making the inquiry suggested, or funds at their disposal for dealing with such cases.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACTS—ST. PAUL'S SCHOOL, HAMMERSMITH.

MR. LAWSON (St. Pancras, W.) asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether the scheme under which St. Paul's School, now situated at Fulham and Hammersmith, can be so modified as to give effect to the recommendation of the Endowed Schools Committee in favour of local control and sympathy being introduced into the management of such schools by allowing the Vestries of Fulham and Hammersmith to be represented on the Governing Body; and, if so, what steps are necessary to secure this object?

THE VICE PRESIDENT (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): Proceedings for the modification of a scheme made—as is that for St. Paul's School—under the provisions of the Endowed Schools Acts, may be taken by the Commissioners either on their own initiative or upon application of the Governors. In view of the fact that the scheme has been recently settled as the result of much deliberation and of full publicity, and that the locality in which the school happens to have been placed upon its removal from St. Paul's Churchyard has no special claim upon the endowment, it is improbable that proceedings will be taken by the Charity Commissioners for the suggested modification of the scheme.

METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE—ACTING SERGEANTS.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, What is the number of acting sergeants (*i.e.* constables performing the duties of sergeants) in the Metropolitan Police Force, and of these how many either are over 35 years of age, or have had more than 10 years' service?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): I am informed by the Chief Commissioner of Police that there are 97 acting sergeants in the Metropolitan Police Force, exclusively of the Dockyard Divisions; and of these 90 are either over 35 years of age or have more than 10 years' service.

REGISTRATION OF VOTES—THE POLLING DISTRICT OF GREAT SANGHALL.

MR. T. E. ELLIS (Merionethshire) (for Mr. BRUNNER) (Cheshire, Northwich) asked the President of the Local Government Board, Why the Court of the Revising Barrister for the Polling District of Great Sanghall is held at Chester, outside the Parliamentary Division of which Great Sanghall forms a part, which results in claimants, overseers, and agents having to walk 10, and in some cases 14, miles; and, whether this inconvenience can be removed?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) (who replied) said: I am informed by the Clerk of the Peace that Chester was appointed by the Court of Quarter Sessions as on the whole the most convenient place at which to hold the Revising Barrister's Court, it being the market town of the inhabitants of Great Sanghall and the other townships included in the district, and also the place where the Petty Sessions for the district are held. Any alteration cannot now be made by Quarter Sessions in time for this year's revision; but the question will be brought forward and considered by the Justices previously to the revision in 1888.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS, 1883, 1885—LURGAN BOARD OF GUARDIANS.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether a representation, under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, 1883 and 1885, was made to the Board of Guardians of the Lurgan Union on the 9th June last, suggesting the erection of additional house accommodation in Soldierstown, Aghalee; whether the attention of the Local Government Board has been directed to the action of the said Board in reference to this matter; and, whether the Local Government Board took any steps to ascertain whether there was sufficient house accommodation within the meaning of the Labourers' Acts in the said district?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Board of Guardians of Lurgan Union had before them the application referred to, but decided it was not one which could be entertained. The attention of the Local Government Board was called to this case by the applicant. They communicated with the Guardians, who stated that they had refused the application on the ground that in no part of the Union was there any difficulty in obtaining this class of house accommodation, vacant cottier houses being of late years the rule, and not the exception, in the rural portion of the Union. The Local Government Board did not consider it necessary to interfere further in the matter.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS—KILBRIDE DIVISION OF RATHMINES UNION.

Mr. HARRIS (Galway, E.) (for Mr. W. J. Corbet) (Wicklow, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, as President of the Local Government Board, Whether it is a fact that the Earl of Wicklow got several schemes for cottages in the Kilbride Division of Rathmines Union thrown out, by undertaking to erect whatever cottages might be required in that Division himself; and, whether he is aware that no cottages have been built by the Earl of Wicklow, in accordance with that undertaking, and that a number of labourers in the Division are consequently unable to obtain house accommodation?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Clerk of Rathdrum Union reports that no scheme was made by the Guardians in regard to building labourers' cottages in the Kilbride Division. Representations had been made for the building of seven cottages in the Division; but an undertaking having been given on behalf of the Earl of Wicklow that he would build whatever cottages were found to be required, the Guardians did not proceed further. The Clerk is aware that the Earl of Wicklow has built a number of labourers' cottages in the Division; but he does not know whether any of them were built subsequent to the undertaking. He is not aware of a number of labourers being unable to obtain house accommodation in the Division. If the hon. Gentleman who puts this Question has any definite information on the subject of the alleged absence of accommodation, and if he will be good enough to communicate it to me, I shall be happy to make further inquiry.

BOARD OF TRADE (RAILWAY DEPARTMENT)—BROMLEY LEVEL CROSSING—LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY.

Mr. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he is aware that two more fatal accidents have occurred in the last fortnight at the Bromley Level Crossing on the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway, making three within a month; and, whether the Government have any power to compel the London, Chatham, and Dover Railway to construct a foot-bridge, without delay, at this most dangerous level crossing?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Yes, Sir; the Board of Trade have been informed of the accidents referred to by the hon. Member. An inquiry into the circumstances attending them has been made by one of the Inspecting Officers of the Board of Trade; and when his Report has been received I shall be in a position to state what steps will be taken to prevent the recurrence of similar accidents.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—CORK AND MACROOM RAILWAY COMPANY—CONTRACT FOR CONVEYANCE OF MAILS.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Postmaster General, What mails are being, and have been, sent by the Cork and Macroom Railway Company, and whether there is any contract between the Company and the Post Office for the carriage of mails; whether it is a fact that they are booked as parcels; whether the Carriers Act protects all Railway Companies for any loss of parcel above £10, unless the same is insured, and, accordingly, what security is given to the public for the safe transmission and delivery of valuable letters; and, for what reason do the authorities endeavour to avoid paying this Company the legitimate revenue which other lines receive for the carriage of mails; and, if so, can he explain why this Company is not paid by the Post Office in the same manner as other Railway Companies?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): A few small day mail bags are carried over the Cork and Macroom Railway, and there is no contract for the carriage of mails on this line. In 1885 the Department endeavoured to come to an agreement with the Company for a yearly payment for the conveyance of these mails; but the Company declined the offer made, and the mails are now carried under the provisions of the Railway and Canal Traffic Act, 1873. A charge at ordinary parcel rates is made by the company and paid by the Department. This practice will continue, unless the Company prefer to go to arbitration. The payments made as above amount to slightly less than the sum the Department offered, and appear to be fair and reasonable. The liability of the Railway Company as regards the safe transmission of these bags is the same which attaches to all Railway Companies in respect to the conveyance of mails. It is true that for a short time parcels were sent in the letter bags; but the practice has been discontinued since March, 1886, and the parcel mails are now sent separately. While it lasted, however, no injury was done to the Company, as the parcels, whether sent separately or otherwise, were duly accounted for to the London Railway Clearing Committee under the Post Office (Parcels) Act. Payments equivalent to parcel rates are accepted voluntarily for similar services in many other cases.

PUBLIC HEALTH — METROPOLITAN ASYLUMS BOARD — THE SOUTH WESTERN HOSPITAL (STOCKWELL).

THE MARQUESS OF CARMARTHEN (Lambeth, Brixton) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If his attention has been called to the following Resolution, passed by the Metropolitan Asylums Board on Saturday, 27th August:—

> "That, should the Ambulance Committee find it necessary, they be empowered to open the South Western Hospital (Stockwell) for the reception of fever patients;"

and, that, considering that this Hospital is surrounded by 400 or 500 houses, mostly inhabited by two families, and that there is an isolated hospital at Winchmore Hill quite empty, he will recommend that the latter be used, instead of opening the Stockwell Hospital for fever patients?

MR. ISAACS (Newington, Walworth) inquired, whether it was not the fact that the hospital at Winchmore Hill was entirely unfurnished, and that it would cost several thousand pounds to prepare it for the reception of patients?

THE PRESIDENT (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): The fact suggested by the hon. Member (Mr. Isaacs is undoubtedly correct. My attention has been called to the Resolution referred to. The question whether the South Western Hospital or that at Winchmore Hill should be opened was considered by the managers, who determined by a considerable majority in favour of opening the former. The Winchmore Hill Hospital is not furnished; and it would, therefore, have taken longer than the other hospital to prepare for patients. The matter, however, was one of urgency; and the Committee have already found it necessary to act upon the resolution of the managers and to open the South Western Hospital. No evidence has been adduced to show that during the 17 years which have elapsed since this Hospital was first opened fever has spread from it to the surrounding houses; and, under all the circumstances, I have not thought it necessary to interfere with the decision of the managers on the subject.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—MR. SHIRLEY'S ESTATE CARRICKMACROSS, CO. MONAGHAN.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the tenants on the estate of Mr. Shirley, in the neighbourhood of Carrickmacross, County Monaghan, who were evicted last March, and who retook possession of their houses pending the hearing of their applications to the Land Court to have a fair rent fixed, have been recently visited by the police, and by them threatened that unless they quitted their homes within two days they would be proceeded against under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; whether he can state upon whose authority and under what statute the police so acted; whether it was open to Mr. Shirley to remove these people under the ordinary law; and, whether, in view of the fact that their applications to have a fair rent fixed are listed for hearing at the next sitting of the Land Court in County Monaghan, he will order the police to suspend their action?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Constabulary Authorities report that 14 tenants on the Shirley estate evicted last September, December, and March have been noticed by the police to leave their houses and farms, where possession has been unlawfully re-taken, within the last few days, and in some cases, when found in the houses, they were informed that if they did not leave, they would be prosecuted under the Statute quoted. These instructions were carried out by order of the Divisional Magistrate. Mr. Shirley might have taken proceedings to recover the premises otherwise than by means of the recent Statute. None of these tenants have served notice to have a fair rent fixed; and in the case of seven of them the statutable period for doing so appears to have expired.

WAR OFFICE—ARMY CONTRACTS—CONTRACT FOR SPONGES.

MR. HANBURY (Preston) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, in the year 1881, the contract for the supply of sponges to the Army was put up to competition, and the price of sponges was, under that contract, 11*d.* and 6*d.* each for Cavalry and Infantry respectively for three years; whether, on the termination of this contract by the contractors, the same contract was in 1882 given, without competition, at the price of 2*s.* 3*d.* and 9*d.* respectively, and for the unusual term of six years; whether it is the fact that the present contractors have received intimation that their contract will be renewed for a further period; whether the sealed patterns, according to which sponges are supplied under the present contract, are the same, and bear the same numbers, as those which supplied the standard for preceding contracts, including that of 1881; and, what is the justification for placing this and other contracts without allowing competition?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter) (who replied) said: The case of the sponge contract is peculiar. The facts are substantially as stated in the hon. Member's Question; but I should say that the contractor of 1881 was a heavy loser by his contract—although the War Department only partially enforced it—and he terminated his contract at the end of the first year. In 1882 competition was deliberately dispensed with, with the full consent of the then Secretary of State, as a means of breaking down a ring which practically constituted a monopoly against the War Office and deprived competition of all real value. The price agreed upon with Messrs. Cohen in 1882 was somewhat below the average paid to the one firm which had held the contract for 14 years, from 1866 to 1880.

MR. HANBURY asked, whether it was not a fact that this contract, which was originally granted for the unusual period of six years without any competition whatever, was about to be renewed for a further term, also without any competition?

MR. NORTHCOTE: Yes; I told my hon. Friend that the facts quoted by him in his Question were substantially correct. The contracts have been renewed on the responsibility of the Director of Contracts.

MR. HANBURY: For how long?

MR. NORTHCOTE: I cannot tell my hon. Friend the exact period; but I will let him know.

EXCISE—SEIZURE OF TOBACCO ON BOARD THE "CITY OF BRISTOL" AT BELFAST.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether Edwin Duniam, Chief Officer of the steamship *City of Bristol* was, at Belfast, on the 1st of June last, sentenced to a month's imprisonment, with the option of a fine, in consequence of the discovery by the Customs officers, in a chain locker of the fore-peak hatch of the ship, of about 20 lbs. of tobacco and cigars; whether the ground of the conviction was that Duniam had the key of the fore-peak hatch; whether it is the fact that the crew had continual access to the hatch, which was used as an ordinary store or lumber room, and whether anyone could enter, without touching the lock, by merely removing a bolt; whether, although Duniam pleaded this state of facts before the Collector of Customs and the magistrate, his request to have certain members of the crew examined on oath was not complied with; whether, protesting his innocence and refusing to pay the fine, he was committed to prison, but released next day, the fine having been paid on his behalf without his consent or knowledge; whether, in consequence of a refusal to refund the sum of £20, paid by the owners of the *City of Bristol* to clear the ship at Belfast on 31st May, except on condition of the dismissal of Duniam, the owners have dismissed him from their employment, after 20 years of service, though satisfied of his innocence; and, whether the case will be made the subject of inquiry?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The facts of the case are substantially as stated in the Question, with some exceptions, and the Commissioners of Customs have directed a further inquiry to be made.

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—PETTY SESSIONS CLERK, CO. SLIGO.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Petty Sessions clerk of the districts of Skreen, Dromore West, and Easky (County Sligo), has been suspended from office; whether his books have been signed by the local Constabulary; what is the nature of the charge against him; and, whether an investigation has been held; and, if so, by whom, and in what manner, and with what result?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Petty Sessions Clerk referred to was suspended and his official books taken possession of by the Constabulary. The charge against the clerk was that he had failed to duly account for the public moneys received by him. The Registrar of Petty Sessions Clerks detailed a member of his staff to inquire into the case, who examined the clerk's books, cash balances, and the mode in which his general duties were discharged. The inspection showed that the duties of the clerk were, with the exception of the default which led to his suspension, well discharged, and that his books and cash balances were correct. As the result of this investigation the clerk was severely reprimanded for his default, and warned against a repetition of it. The suspension was then removed.

In answer to a further Question,

COLONEL KING-HARMAN said, the failure of the clerk to pay public money was a failure to pay the money due for the financial quarter ending 31st July, and to furnish an account to the Quarter Sessions. The clerk did not do this until he received notice of suspension. He explained that this was in consequence of a previous illness; and on going through his books, as he had said, the cash balance was found to be perfectly correct.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—REMOVAL FROM BALLYMOTE.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) (for Mr. FLYNN) (Cork, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that a protest against the removal of the head-quarter station of the Royal Irish Constabulary from Ballymote, County Sligo, has been extensively signed by gentry, merchants, and traders of Ballymote and district; whether Ballymote is by much the most populous town in the district, is centrally situate at the junction of four baronies, has 12 important fairs in the year, is the place where the Quarter Sessions, Petty Sessions, and Land Sessions are held, and has been a head-quarter Constabulary station since the formation of this force, now some 50 years ago; and, why the head-quarters have been removed?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Government had no knowledge of the protest referred to in the Question having been received; but the facts were substantially as stated in the second part of the Question. The head-quarters of the Constabulary had been removed from Ballymote owing to the difficulty experienced in getting a suitable building, or a site for a building, at a reasonable rate. He would make further inquiries as to the protest from the residents.

LITERATURE, SCIENCE, AND ART—THE PICTURES AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY—REMOVAL OF VARNISH.

MR. LAFONE (Southwark, Bermondsey) (for Mr. MORGAN HOWARD) (Camberwell, Dulwich) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If any Report has been received by the Government from the Director of the National Gallery respecting certain successful experiments made by Mr. W. E. Jones, of Melbourne Grove, East Dulwich, in removing, by a new method, the varnishes of pictures at the Gallery; whether it appears by such Report that certain injurious chemicals usually employed in this work have been superseded by Mr. Jones's method, and whether the varnishes of valuable pictures at the Gallery have been thereby removed without the least detriment to the paint, and without the slightest "skinning" of the pictures; whether the Director has expressed his great satisfaction with these experiments; and, whether the Government will recommend the Trustees of the National Gallery to ascertain the secret of the discovery referred to, in order that the National Collection of valuable pictures there may be protected and preserved?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I understand that some experiments were made by Mr. Jones in the presence of the Director of the National Gallery, and that they were successful; but the Director does not think it necessary to adopt Mr. Jones's process in lieu of that already in use in the Gallery.

ITALY—DUTIES ON PIG IRON—CONTINUANCE OF THE GERMAN AND ITALIAN TREATY.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he is aware that the Italian Chamber of Deputies has passed a Bill imposing a duty of 8*s.* per ton upon pig iron, and proposing to levy very heavy duties on manufactured iron; whether the German and Italian Treaty is to be continued, notice of its termination being required by 1st August, 1887; and, whether Great Britain will enjoy the most favoured nation treatment by Convention, and without a Treaty?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): The Italian Parliament has passed a Tariff Bill having effects such as are described in the hon. Member's Question. Her Majesty's Government are not informed if the German-Italian Commercial Treaty has been denounced; but it is probable that it has, as certain Articles in the Tariff Act are inconsistent with it. Great Britain will enjoy the most favoured Nation treatment under its Commercial Treaty with Italy, which continues in force.

BULGARIA — MISSION OF GENERAL ERNROTH TO SOFIA.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the report is true that the British Ambassador in Constantinople, acting in concert with the Austrian and Italian Ambassadors, have protested in the names of their respective Governments against the Mission of General Ernroth to Sofia; whether the case has been submitted to Germany for arbitration; and, whether that Power has consented to undertake the office?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I am not able to give the hon. Member any information on the subject of his Question.

DR. TANNER: May I ask the right Gentleman what reason he can allege for not answering the Question, or is there any reason——["Order!"]

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: It is extremely inexpedient to give any information on the subject.

DR. TANNER: When may I expect to get an answer?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

DR. TANNER: I expect to get an answer, and I shall put the Question down again.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—EVICTIONS AT TANG—PROSECUTIONS.

MR. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.): asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, How many men altogether were summoned for taking part in the eviction at Tang on the 17th August; whether all of them will be prosecuted on the double charge preferred in the summonses; whether, since Friday last, additional summonses have been taken out and served; and, whether, in these cases also, it is intended to proceed on two distinct charges arising out of the same transaction?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton), in reply, said, that altogether 17 summonses were issued, and were issued the same night. No summonses were taken out after Friday. With regard to the latter part of the Question, he had to repeat the answer he made on Friday morning—that answer was that he could not make any statement with regard to the pending prosecutions, further than that if it appeared on the face of the evidence that only one offence had been committed, only one sentence would be imposed.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) said, that the summons was not served on some of the defendants who lived a great distance from Mullingar until Saturday; and he wished to know, considering the gravity of the charges and the novelty of the proceedings, whether these men would get more than two days to prepare their defence, the cases coming on for hearing to-morrow?

MR. GIBSON said, the defence of one defendant would be the same for all the others.

MR. SEXTON: The defence will involve the summoning of a number of witnesses.

EVICTIONS (SCOTLAND)—EVICTION AT CAIRNS ABERLOUR.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether the report in the Edinburgh *Evening News* is correct, describing the eviction of John Middleton, farmer, of Cairns Aberlour, by a force of labourers and policemen, who, without notice, turned him and his family out, tore off the roof, and demolished the farm house, or left it in flames; whether it is true that Middleton was not in arrears of rent, but the rent had been paid up till the last term; and, whether the Government will consider the desirability of bringing in a measure regulating evictions in Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): My attention was only called to this matter last night, and I am not prepared to give an answer at present.

REGISTRATION OF ELECTORS (SCOTLAND)—NON-PAYMENT OF RATES.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether it is the fact that the large number of crofters disfranchised for non-payment of rates in the Western Highlands and Islands are under £4 a-year rental, and have been disfranchised in consequence of the landlords not having paid the compounded rates within the appointed time?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I have no information in amplification of the answer I gave on the 2nd of September.

SCOTLAND—THE WESTERN ISLES—LOCHMADDY, UIST.

DR. CLARK (Caithness) asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention had been called to the allegation that there is no church or place of worship at Lochmaddy, the principal town of Uist, and that the landlord of the district refuses to grant a site to the Free Church; and, whether the Government will introduce a measure next Session to compel land to be granted for places of worship where such are required?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I have no information on this matter, and it will take some time to obtain it.

BURIAL ACTS — THE BATTERSEA BURIAL BOARD — THE ROSE HILL CEMETERY.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a public meeting convened on Thursday last by the Chairman of the Sutton (Surrey) Local Board, on the requisition of 293 of the principal tradesmen, medical men, and other ratepayers of the town, and to the following Resolution adopted by an overwhelming majority at such meeting—

> "That, in the opinion of this meeting, the offer of the Battersea Burial Board as to Rose Hill Cemetery should be accepted, with the conditions suggested by the Local Board deputation;"

and, whether, having regard thereto, and to the urgent public necessity of the case to a large Metropolitan constituency, and also to the parish of Sutton, he is now prepared to accede to the application of the Battersea Burial Board for permission to use the Rose Hill site for burial purposes?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): My attention has been called to the fact that a meeting was held on Thursday last. I was not informed by whom the requisition was signed. I daily received conflicting statements on this subject, which I am still considering.

WAR OFFICE—REGIMENTAL BANDS AT PUBLIC MEETINGS.

DR. TINDAL ROBERTSON (Brighton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether an Order has been recently issued from the Horse Guards to prevent regimental bands from playing in districts other than those in which the regiments to which they belong is located; whether he is aware that this new Order has prevented the bands of the Guards' regiments from playing in several places where they had undertaken to play; whether this new Regulation has been the subject of complaint from various towns where the Guards' bands had been engaged to play; and, whether the Regulation had his approval?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): An Order was issued on the 2nd of August under which regimental bands were forbidden to play out of the military district in which their head-quarters were situated, without special permission from the War Office. I believe that the Guards' bands were prevented by this Rule from fulfilling some of their engagements. One case—that of Brighton—has already been brought to my notice by the Judge Advocate General. In others local complaints have been made; and I am bound to say that I think it would have been better if longer notice had been given of the change of practice intended. As regards the last part of the hon. Member's Question, the Commander-in-Chief has informed me that he considers the Order advisable on military grounds.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked, whether the same Rule applied to the Royal Artillery Woolwich band?

MR. E. STANHOPE: The Rule applies to all bands.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—INTIMIDATION —LISTOWEL PETTY SESSIONS, CO. KERRY.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether three farmers were recently summoned before the Listowel Petty Sessions, County Kerry, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, for intimidating and preventing the collection of rent; whether, previous to the cases being heard, the three farmers charged waited upon the landlord's agent, and made an ample apology, offering to pay all costs; and, whether, in consequence of this acknowledgment of wrong-doing, all proceedings against them were dropped?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I am glad to be able to answer the entire of the Question in the affirmative.

ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE (INDIA)—HALF-STAFF ALLOWANCES.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derby, Ilkeston) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether an executive officer of the Medical Staff in India, who officiated for less than one month as Deputy Surgeon General in the absence of the Deputy Surgeon General on sick leave or furlough, receives no allowances for the period, although he performed the duties in addition to his other duties; whether, in such an instance, the "half-staff" of the appointment reverted to the State; whether the acting officer would be held pecuniarily liable in the event of loss of stores or other mistakes; and, whether officers officiating on the Military (combatant) Staff in a similar way would draw the "half-staff" for broken periods; and, why the difference is made in the case of medical officers?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.) (who replied) said: In accordance with the undertaking given by me on the 17th of June, when this Question was first put, a Despatch on the subject was addressed to the Government of India; but no reply has yet been received.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—MAJOR LIDWELL, DROMARD HOUSE, CO. TIPPERARY.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on the morning of Sunday the 22 ultimo, Major

Lidwell, of Dromard House, County Tipperary, went, accompanied by other persons, to the farm of one of his tenants, Patrick Stapleton, and, by the use of an explosive, blew up a bridge connecting the farm with the public road; whether, in consequence of the explosion, a woman named Kennedy was struck on the temple by a stone; whether Major Lidwell returned to the place after dark the same evening, and, by another explosion, completed the destruction of the bridge; whether he then proceeded to the house occupied by Mrs. Stapleton and her children, threatened to "blow them and their house into the elements," and also threatened some neighbours who came to the assistance of Mrs. Stapleton, that he would make them suffer; whether Mrs. Stapleton immediately reported the case to the local police, and has been since informed by them that they are awaiting "instructions from the authorities;" whether Major Lidwell adjudicates as a magistrate in the Templemore District; and, what determination has been come to upon the case?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, he regretted he had received no further information on the subject.

MR. SEXTON: I must take every opportunity that occurs to get an answer to this Question.

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: I assure the hon. Gentleman that I am doing all I can to get the particulars, and I intend to take further steps.

REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) —REMUNERATION OF UNION CLERKS.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he is aware that an opinion has been universally expressed by Boards of Guardians in Ireland that the cost of remunerating clerks of Unions employed in connection with the work of Parliamentary registration should be defrayed out of Imperial funds, instead of, as present, out of local rates; and, whether similar representations have reached him from England; and, if so, whether he will consider the advisability of introducing legislation dealing with the subject?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON, Leeds, N.): I understand that the Irish Government has received from Boards of Guardians expressions of opinion in the direction indicated by the hon. Member. No similar representations have been made to the Local Government Board in England; and I am not aware of any intention on the part of the Government of initiating legislation on the subject.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—"BOYCOTTING" IN THE QUEEN'S COUNTY.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the Return giving 21 cases of Boycotting in the Queen's County, Whether he will state the locality in which each of the alleged cases has occurred, with a view to enabling the Representatives of the county to test the accuracy of the Return by personal inquiry?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet), (who replied) said: The Government have already stated to the House that they cannot undertake to give the names of the persons Boycotted, or the particular locality in which they preside.

POST OFFICE—HOUSE OF COMMONS—RE-DIRECTION OF LETTERS.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been directed to the imperfect way in which the duty of re-directing the letters of Members which are sent, in the first instance, to the House of Commons is at present performed; and, whether he will give instructions that this work shall be more efficiently discharged during the Recess?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): The short Notice which the hon. Member has given has prevented me from making so full an inquiry into the matter as I should have desired; but I may, nevertheless, state with confidence that I have no reason to think that the duty of re-directing Members' letters from the House is imperfectly or carelessly performed, but that the contrary is the case. In order to prevent delay, letters which have to be re-directed are not sent to the House, but are dealt with in the District Post Office by the postal staff of the House, with such assistance as may be necessary; and I am informed that, on an average, 3,000 letters a-day are thus re-directed, the number sometimes exceeding 5,000. The work appears to be done so carefully that I am assured that no written complaint of an error in re-directing has been received during the present Session, and only one personal complaint. This was from the hon. Member himself about a month ago. He was then requested to furnish the covers of the letters stated to have been incorrectly treated, with a view to inquiry; but this he has not done. I may remind the House that there are three other Members whose names are similar to that of the hon. Member, although two of them are not spelt in the same way; and it is, of course, possible that an obscurely-addressed letter may have been sent to the wrong person; but there is no evidence of this.

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the fact that two letters addressed to Mr. W. M. M'Arthur, M.P., have been received by me recently, and that I frequently receive letters intended for the Lord Advocate, while he receives letters intended for me; also, that two letters received for me at the House of Commons were sent to the Constitutional Club? Perhaps my experience in this respect may be peculiar.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER (St. Andrew's, &c.) stated that on more than one occasion his letters had been re-directed to the Members whose names were next to his above and below in Vacher's Parliamentary Guide.

Mr. RAIKES: I think it is possible that the letters referred to may have been re-directed at some other office, and not by the staff in the House.

IRELAND — HORSE BREEDING—WINNERS AT THE ROYAL DUBLIN SOCIETY'S SHOW.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) (for Mr. Hayden) (Leitrim, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Can he now give the information promised in reference to the places to which the winners of the prizes for sires at the recent Royal Dublin Society's Show will be stationed?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet), (who replied) said: An authorized statement on the part of the Royal Dublin Society appeared some time ago in the public Press giving full particulars as to the sires and the head-quarters at which they will be stationed.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—DAY MAILS FROM DRUMSNA.

Mr. TUITE (Westmeath, N.) (for Mr. Hayden) (Leitrim, S.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether Drumsna is a sorting office for Kilmore and Hillotree; whether the day mails from Drumsna for Dublin are forwarded direct from that station; whether the night mails are first sent into Carrick-on-Shannon, passing by the Drumsna Railway Station to Dublin four hours after; and, whether he will so arrange that the night mails will be forwarded direct as the day mails now are, and thus give the people of the three districts named a much longer time within which to write their correspondence?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): I undertook, on the 1st instant, to have inquiry made in Ireland on the several points embraced in the hon. Member's Question; but there has not been time for a Report to be furnished, or to give to the matter, which involves detail, the consideration which must precede a decision. There shall be no unnecessary delay.

ADMIRALTY—DOCKYARDS—DISCHARGE OF WORKMEN AT DEVONPORT DOCKYARD.

Sir JOHN PULESTON (Devonport) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether, having reference to the number of men in the Devonport Dockyard being reduced to about the proportion assigned to it of the 18,000 at which the Dockyard establishments are to be maintained, he can now say that preference will be given to the re-employment of those discharged in filling up vacancies as they may arise from deaths, superannuation, or other causes?

The FIRST LORD (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): In the event of any re-entries, preference will be given to such discharged hands as may present themselves for re-employment, provided their qualifications are suitable.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked, what was the average number of re-entries per annum owing to the cause mentioned in the Question ?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he did not know that there had been any hitherto, because the tendency in past years had been to increase rather than diminish establishments.

ADMIRALTY (SHIPS, &c.)—SHIPS BUILT BY CONTRACT — REFUSAL OF THE "AUSTRALIA" AND OTHERS.

SIR JOHN PULESTON (Devonport) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Admiralty declined to take over the *Australia* on account of defective work; whether the extra cost is to be made good by the contractors or by the Admiralty; whether more than one Survey or Report has been made, in which it is stated that the ship was not built according to specification in many particulars; that the torpedo arrangements were faulty; that the racers had not been fitted with the care necessary for the safe working of the guns; and that the quick firing guns had not been placed on hard wood, in the manner such work is done in the Dockyards, and so forth; whether the Dockyard officials have recommended the retention of a large sum out of the balance remaining unpaid to the contractors; whether the *Phaeton* and *Galatea*, the *Archer*, and other contract-built ships have required alterations and repairs, at heavy cost to the Admiralty; and, whether he will grant a Return of the cost of alterations and repairs of ships built by private firms during the last five or six years, and also lay upon the Table of the House the various Reports made by the officials of the Admiralty or Dockyards on the *Australia* and other ships handed over by the shipbuilders ?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The Admiralty have not delined to take over the *Australia*. The Report of Survey is satisfactory; but some few minor items have been left incomplete, or will require adjustment. The cost of completing these in accordance with the contract will be paid by the contractors. The racers to her guns and the sills to torpedo ports require slight adjustment. The stands for the quick-firing guns have been laid on hard wood; but there is a mistake of about five-eighths of an inch as to the height required. In accordance with the usual practice and with the provisions of the contract, a sum of money has been kept back to cover the cost of any defects or deficiencies that may be discovered. With regard to other contract-built ships, some defects have occurred in the boilers of three of the vessels of the *Archer* class, which are being made good by the contractors. The defects in the machinery of the *Phaeton* occurred after the expiration of her 12 months' guarantee from contractors, and were consequently made good at the cost of the Admiralty. The hulls of these ships have been built satisfactorily. The *Galatea* is still in the contractors' hands at Glasgow. There will be no objection to give the Return relating to the cost of alterations and repairs of ships built by contract. The Reports of Admiralty and Dockyard officers are, however, made for the information of the Admiralty, and are confidential.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY — CHARGE AGAINST THE SERGEANT OF POLICE STATION AT PIKE, BALLINGARRY, CO. TIPPERARY.

MR. GILHOOLY (Cork, W.) (for Mr. P. J. O'BRIEN) (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any Report has been received with reference to the sergeant in charge of the police station at Pike, County of Tipperary, having been drunk on the evening of the 30th June last when absent on duty at Lorrha Petty Sessions; and, if not, will he cause inquiry to be made into the fact ?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said : No Report of such an occurrence has been received by the County Inspector.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Whose duty would it be to report to the County Inspector ?

COLONEL KING-HARMAN: The District Inspector.

MR. SEXTON: And who would report to the District Inspector? Will the right hon. and gallant Gentleman inquire whether this occurrence took place?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Inquiries are being made.

Mr. GILHOOLY: I will repeat the Question on Thursday.

TITHE COMMUTATION ACTS—INCIDENCE OF CHARGE.

Mr. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, under the Acts for the Commutation of Tithes, the contributions towards compulsory redemption are payable by the occupier, or persons in possession of the land, whether as freeholders, lessees under a beneficial lease, or mortgagee; whether he is aware that tithes are subject to local rates, and that their commutation will deprive Local Authorities of the means of recovering that source of income; and, whether, if the facts be as stated, Her Majesty's Government will introduce a measure to prevent injustice being done to leaseholders and the ratepayers generally, by the present mode of compulsory tithe redemption?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Contributions towards the compulsory redemption of tithe rent-charge are, under the Acts for the commutation of tithes, payable by the owners of the lands chargeable therewith—that is, the persons in actual receipt of the rents or profits of the land, whether as freeholders or mortgagees, in possession. In the case of a beneficial lease (on which a rent less than two-thirds the value of the premises is reserved, and of which the term exceeds 14 years) the lessee and lessor are jointly liable according to their respective interests. In regard to the second part of the Question of the hon. Member, a rent-charge has been substituted for tithes, and this rent-charge is subject to local rates under 6 & 7 *Will.* IV. c. 71, ss. 69 and 70. When the rent-charge is redeemed the Local Authorities lose the rates upon it; but the rateable value of the property which was subject to the rent-charge is increased when freed from the charge; and, consequently, the rates lost in respect of the rent-charge are practically recouped by the increased sum received from rates on the property. I am not prepared, therefore, to accept the view of the hon. Member that injustice is done either to leaseholders or ratepayers.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—EAST INDIA REVENUE ACCOUNTS—THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

In reply to Mr. Bradlaugh (Northampton),

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster) said: In the event of Supply being closed on Wednesday, the Indian Budget will be taken on Thursday; and in the event of Supply not being closed until Thursday the Indian Budget will be taken on Friday. I hope I may rely on it that the days I have mentioned will be the last days of Supply.

Subsequently,

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine) asked, whether the Indian Budget, when taken, would be the first Order of the Day?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I should be exceedingly happy to meet the hon. and gallant Gentleman's views in the matter; but he must be aware that I cannot enter into any engagement of the kind. At this period of the Session I must make the arrangements which are best calculated, in my judgment, to promote the convenience of the House.

IRREGULAR QUESTIONS.

Sir JOHN PULESTON (Devonport), rose to put a Question arising out of an answer which had been given with reference to the reduction of men in the Dockyards. He wished to ask, was it not a fact that some 1,200 or 1,300 men a-year were retired by deaths or superannuation——

Mr. SPEAKER interposing, said: I hope the hon. Gentleman will not go back on Questions which have been answered long before. The practice is very inconvenient, and I have already expressed a hope that the House would not sanction it.

THEATRES—OFFICIAL SURVEYS—BURNING OF THE EXETER THEATRE.

Sir JOHN PULESTON (Devonport): I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has any information whatever which has not been published, relating to the terrible catastrophe which took place at Exeter

Theatre last night; and whether, also, considering that this was a new theatre, having been built but very recently, any official survey was deemed necessary by the Home Office?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): No official survey was held by the Home Office, because the Home Office has no authority to hold any survey in the Provinces. This jurisdiction rests entirely with the Justices in Special Session, who may require, as a condition of granting a licence, that a survey of the building shall be made, and certain structural conditions be complied with. With regard to the accident itself, I regret to say that I am informed by telegraph received a few minutes ago that as many as 119 persons are dead; but I am glad to say, as a set-off against that, I am also informed that those who are injured are progressing favourably.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State a Question of which I have given him private Notice, Whether, in consequence of the frequently-recurring disasters and loss of life in theatres, and other places of public meeting and amusement, steps will be immediately taken to appoint Inspectors by and under the Home Department, whose duty it shall be to inspect all such places of amusement and meeting in Great Britain and Ireland, and who might have immediate power to prevent any performance in such theatres and places as shall not be adequately provided with commodious exit for use in all cases of sudden emergency; and also, whether, bearing in mind the fact that most of the fires in theatres—and notably the calamitous fire which occurred last night in the City of Exeter—originate on the stage, an iron drop-screen shall in future be deemed a necessary appurtenance in every theatre?

MR. MATTHEWS: I regret to say that it would not be possible to act on the suggestion of the hon. Member without legislation. Outside the Metropolitan area there is no power in any Government Department, or in any Local Authority, to inspect theatres, or to insist on structural alterations, except as a condition of licensing a theatre in the first instance, and possibly under local Acts of Parliament. Within the Metropolitan area the Metropolitan Board of Works have sufficient powers to enforce the precautions which they may deem necessary; and they have largely acted on those powers. The dreadful calamity which has occurred at Exeter shows the necessity of legislation for Provincial theatres, and the Government will give their attention to the subject.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED BRUTALITY AT BALLINASLOE.

MR. HARRIS (Galway, E.): I wish to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can give any information as to the truth or falsehood of the statement in *The Daily News* of this day, as to the outrage by a constable on Mr. Lewis Ward. The statement is:—

> "A despatch from Ballinasloe states that, on Saturday night, a man named Patrick Barratt was being conveyed to the train *en route* for Galway, bail having been refused in his case, and a large crowd of the leading inhabitants of the town assembled to escort the prisoner to the station. Barratt a short time ago was evicted. On the departure of the train loud cheers were given for Barratt and the Plan of Campaign, and this appeared to provoke the police, who proceeded to baton every person on the railway platform indiscriminately. The police, in passing through the town subsequently, were hooted by the crowd who had assembled in the streets. Mr. Lewis Ward, a son of Mr. Lewis Ward, builder and contractor, was set upon by Constable Nolan, and his skull was fractured, and his ear almost severed from his head. The young gentleman was borne to his father's house in an insensible condition, and he has had to be left downstairs, as the doctor advised his friends that his removal upstairs might prove fatal. The constable ran away after perpetrating this outrage; but was identified by Mr. Harris, jun. Several gentlemen witnessed the assault, including Messrs. J. S. Smith and Knox, of the National Bank, and Mr. R. F. Walker of *The Western News*. Mr. Ward, who is in a most precarious condition, is under the care of Dr. Delahunt, who is in constant attendance upon him."

Can the right hon. Gentleman give me any information as to this statement? The parties concerned are friends of mine, and I shall be very glad to receive any information.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): I am afraid I have no information to give the hon. Gentleman. He only gave me his Notice as I was entering the House. I have heard nothing of the matter; but if he will put a Notice on the Paper I will inquire about it.

MR. HARRIS: Will the right hon. Gentleman give me the information to-morrow, or will he be likely to have it?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I may be able, but I cannot guarantee it.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, considering the gravity of this case and also the number of these unprovoked attacks by the police at evictions, and other incidents, and what may happen during the winter, whether he will consider the necessity of issuing instructions to the police to abstain from violence, except in cases where actual violence or obstruction is offered?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no reason to believe that the police have used violence, except in cases in which actual violence has been used against them.

Mr. HARRIS: Well, I can read a letter which I have got on the subject, and which leaves no doubt that the Constabulary do so.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order! If the hon. Gentleman puts his Question down on the Paper, it will, no doubt, receive attention.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SUPERANNUATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, seeing that the Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill was only introduced on the 4th of August, and that it dealt with a very important subject, the Government would withdraw it this Session and re-introduce it early next year?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I regret that it is not in my power to respond to the appeal of the hon. Member. The Bill is necessary in order to validate certain arrangements which have been made, and will be made from time to time, by the Treasury in the interests of the Civil servants themselves, and which have been called in question by the Public Accounts Committee. The Bill has, according to the hon. Gentleman's own statement, been before the House five weeks, and has been brought to the notice of almost everyone chiefly concerned, and the Government feel it necessary to press it on the consideration of the House and pass it into law, if we can, in the course of the present Session.

CRIMINAL LAW AND PROCEDURE (IRELAND) ACT, 1887—THE PROCLAIMED MEETING IN CLARE.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg, Sir, to ask a Question of the hon. Member for Stockport (Mr. Gedge) concerning an important Notice which he has put down on the Order Book—

> "To call the attention of the House to the conduct of the Government and of certain Members of the House with respect to the proclaimed meeting in the County of Clare, on Sunday the 4th of September; and to move a Resolution."

I wish to ask the hon. Member for Stockport whether he will give the House any intimation of the time when he intends to bring that Resolution forward?

[No reply.]

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Well, as I cannot get any answer from the hon. Member, I will ask a Question of the Government. I beg to ask, whether the Government have made up their minds—as it appears we are not to be allowed to discuss this question—whether they have made up their minds to prosecute the hon. Member for Wednesbury (Mr. P. Stanhope) for taking part in a proclaimed meeting in Ireland last Sunday?

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I must say that I am taken by surprise. It is not in my power to give an answer to such a question; and even if it were in my power I should not give an answer to such a Question as that which the hon. Baronet has addressed to me. I have no knowledge whatever of the circumstances. It is not within my Department; and, therefore, I am not aware whether the hon. Member for Wednesbury has brought himself within the law or not.

Mr. E. ROBERTSON (Dundee): May I ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether it is intended to prosecute any persons who took part in the meeting?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Gibson) (Liverpool, Walton): It is not the practice, as far as I am aware, for Questions to be asked and Questions to be answered as to the action of the Crown in instituting prosecutions.

Mr. R. T. REID (Dumfries, &c.): I beg to ask, whether the Government will give us the instructions which were issued to the officers in command of the military and police as to the circumstances under which they were or were not to interfere with the meeting?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR) (Manchester, E.): The request which has been made to the Government is not one which I think is usually addressed to the Government, or one which I think it would be in the public interest to answer.

MR. R. T. REID: Allow me to state my reason for asking the Question. It is obviously illegal to disperse a meeting if that meeting be of a peaceable character, and my object is to learn from the right hon. Gentlemen whether the military and police are commissioned to interfere with peaceable meetings in Ireland, or only when they became otherwise than peaceable?

[No reply.]

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

——o——

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

(1.) £441,500 (including a Supplementary sum of £256,000), to complete the sum for Disturnpiked and Main Roads, England and Wales.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I wish to ask the Government a question in reference to this Supplementary sum of £256,000. It seems to me to be part of a sum of £450,000 supplied in the beginning of the year by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the highways generally. It would appear that there is a sum of £50,000 given to Ireland, though it is not a gift to Ireland in the ordinary sense of the word, but simply an equivalent—and not a very large one—for the sum of £450,000 allocated this year to England and Scotland in respect of highways. The £50,000 given to Ireland is to be devoted to a variety of purposes, one of them being the breeding of horses; but I understand that more than that sum will be taken from the county cess towards this grant.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that the question he is raising is not relevant to the present Vote.

COLONEL NOLAN: The grant is given to relieve the highway rates in England, and I want to know what equivalent sum is to be given to Ireland as against this £450,000? For all I know there may be another item in the Votes dealing with the turnpike rates in England, and undoubtedly the Irish people have to contribute to the cost out of the county cess. Therefore, what I wish to know is, whether this is really the only sum which appears in the Votes, or whether there is any corresponding sum for Ireland?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The £50,000 which has been granted to Ireland is in consideration of the extra grant which this year has been given to England and Scotland in respect of highways.

COLONEL NOLAN: Is there any other sum?

MR. GOSCHEN: It has no reference to the ordinary grant, but is in respect of the additional grant given this year which appears in the Supplementary Estimate. It is given in order that Ireland may have her fair share this year of the special grant.

COLONEL NOLAN: I do not clearly understand how the matter stands. Are there two sums given for highways?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. RITCHIE) (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): No.

COLONEL NOLAN: There is no other sum beyond this £450,000.

MR. RITCHIE: No.

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £60,000 (including a Supplementary sum of £35,000), to complete the sum for Disturnpiked and other Roads, Scotland.

COLONEL NOLAN: I am not going to quarrel with the amount of money proposed to be given to Scotland; but I would point out that while £60,000 is given to Scotland in consideration of the proportion of her contribution to the Imperial rates, only £50,000 is given to Ireland. In one sense I am sorry, and in another I am glad, that Scotland is so well off that she is able to contribute more to the Imperial Revenue than Ireland; but I cannot understand, if the population of the two countries is taken into consideration, why Scotland should receive £60,000, and Ireland only £50,000.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) £213,392, to complete the sum for Public Education, Scotland.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): I regret that I am unable to see upon the Treasury Bench either of the Members who represent the Scotch Office—neither the Lord Advocate nor the Scotch Lord of the Treasury. [The Lord Advocate here entered the House.] I regret that I feel myself compelled to take up a few minutes of the time of the House at this late period of the Session in order that I may bring under the notice of my right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate a question which affects one of the local school boards in Caithness, the county which I represent. If the Vote had been brought on earlier I should like to have said something about the present condition of education in the Highlands, where the school rates only run from 2*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* in the pound in consequence of the local school boards having been compelled to build palatial schoolhouses where they were really not wanted. I have no wish to move the reduction of the salary of the Inspector, because I think my right hon. and learned Friend will agree with me that the withholding of the grant in the case I am about to call attention to is an unjust act, and will direct the money which has been unlawfully and unjustly withheld by the Education Department to be paid over, and that the Government will not allow the school board, which is supported out of the rates, to continue an unequal fight with the Education Department, which is supported by taxes. The Inspector recommended in the case of the Highland School at Latheron a few window blinds, and some illustrations of natural history might be supplied with advantage. When the school board expected to receive their grant their attention was called to this recommendation, and "my Lords" stopped one-tenth of the grant because it had not been complied with. When the school board were made acquainted with the stoppage they wrote to "my Lords" asking what it was they wanted, and especially to inform them what kind of natural history illustrations the Inspector required; but "my Lords" refused to tell them. They told the board to ask the Inspector; but the Inspector, on being appealed to, said he was unable to instruct them. They put up a blind to the only window at which the sun could enter; but the blind they put up did not satisfy the Inspector, and because the window blind of a small Highland school does not suit the Inspector again the grant is stopped. Twice, then, the grant has been stopped upon a recommendation which the Inspector says he has no power to define, and in regard to which "my Lords" refuse to give any information whatever. I maintain that the grant has been illegally withheld. The board put up one blind, which is all that is necessary, and to put up more would prejudicially affect the ventilation of the school. So far as the natural history illustrations are concerned, there is in a town in the neighbourhood with 1,000 inhabitants a big school where secondary education is taught. This is only an elementary school; but the Inspector requires in the small elementary school exactly the same natural history illustrations as are provided in the school for secondary education. The result is that the school board have been compelled to provide these illustrations; but I hold that the act of the Education Department was unjust, and I will go further and say that it was illegal. The section under which "my Lords" have acted is the 32nd of the Scotch Education Code, which allows a reduction of the grant or a fine if the Inspector reports that there are faults in the instruction, discipline, or registration, or overcrowding in the class rooms, if after six months' notice there has been a failure to remedy any defect which the Inspector has pointed out which seriously interferes with the efficiency of the school, or if the managers have failed to provide proper books and maps for the carrying on of elementary instruction. Now, these natural history illustrations have no connection with elementary instruction, and by compelling the school board to obtain them "my Lords" have gone beyond the limits of the law. It would appear, in this case, that the Inspector has been animated by *pique* against the school board, and "my Lords" distinctly refused to say what they wanted. Whenever they have stated what they wanted their wishes have been complied with, whether the things provided were considered to be necessary or not. The question I wish to put to the Lord Advocate is whether he considers that the action of "my Lords" has been justifiable or in accordance with the law?

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): The Lord Advocate went minutely through the heads of this Vote when he introduced it the other day, and I must congratulate the right hon. and learned Gentleman upon the successful work which has been done by the Scotch Education Department. The Vote has been of a most interesting nature for the last five or six years, inasmuch as it has been an experiment as to the result of separating the education of Scotland from that of England, the system of centralization which had previously been carried on not having been attended with the most satisfactory results for a considerable period of years. Viewed in that light the Report of the Department is a gratifying one. We have the Report now in our hands, and I am sure that hon. Members must have been much interested not only by the statement which was made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, but by those which are contained in the Report. In the part of the country in which I am most interested myself—namely, the Highlands—there has been difficulty in regard to the attendance, and I know that in that respect greater difficulty has been experienced by the Scotch Education Department than in any other part of the country. The root of the difficulty lies in the fact that the country has hitherto allowed private persons—owners of land—to interfere with the distribution of the population in the Highlands; and the consequence is that the population is now so widely scattered in some places, and the conditions which prevail are of such a character, as to put serious difficulties in the way of the rates, and to prevent the maintenance of proper schools except at very great expense. I am willing to acknowledge that what are called the attendance grants are on a liberal scale; but there are some anomalies, which arise from circumstances I have already called the attention of the Lord Advocate to. For instance, there is an invidious distinction drawn between teachers who are graduates of a Scotch University and those who are not. In certain specified districts any school taught by a University graduate can get a grant of 10*s.* for certain subjects; whereas teachers who are not University graduates can only get a grant of 6*s.* Only the other day there was a meeting of Scotch teachers and members of school boards at Oban to take into consideration principally the working of the Scotch Code as applied to the Highlands, and that meeting came to the conclusion that the distinction between graduates and non-graduates is invidious and unjust, and that the grant should be paid for good results irrespective of such distinctions. I think that when the Education Department comes to think over the matter that should be the test by which the payment of grants should be made. The question should not be considered whether they have been obtained by University graduates or non-University graduates. I can understand the desire of the Government to get the most highly qualified teachers they can obtain; but I can scarcely conceive why teachers who do not happen to have had an opportunity of educating themselves at a Scotch University should be placed at a disadvantage. At the same time, I hope the Government will be able to see their way not to the taking away of the increased grant from University graduates, but to extending it to all teachers who can show the same results in the district to which this rule applies. There is another point which I should like to bring under the notice of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and that is the teaching of Gaelic in the Highland schools. I know quite well that the sympathies of the right hon. and learned Gentleman are in that direction, and I should like to see it properly dealt with. I have never advocated it on purely sentimental but upon utilitarian grounds. It is distinctly stated in the Report that the Education Department is willing to recognize the importance of teaching Gaelic, because it would facilitate the teaching of English. There is something else which would make it a very valuable adjunct to the teaching of the young—namely, that it would be a means of enabling grants to be earned in connection with specific subjects, and of earning them in places where such grants are a great desideratum. Therefore, upon utilitarian grounds, I think the teaching of Gaelic ought to be encouraged. I am not going to attempt to prove why, in the Highlands, Gaelic should be taught any more than in England the English language should be taught. What I complain of is that Her Majesty's Ministers have not encouraged the teaching of the Highland language in the same way as they have encouraged the giving of instruction in other subjects. As far back as the year 1875 there was a Minute of the Scotch Education Department admitting the necessity for doing this. The Minute stated that in certain specified Highland counties Gaelic might be taught as a specific subject, provided it was taught on a scheme to be approved by Her Majesty's Inspectors. Such a scheme was drawn up, but it never got beyond the proof stage. Too much was demanded, and the consequence was that no more was heard of the scheme. In a subsequent Minute it was stated that a scheme for instruction in Gaelic had been drawn up by the Inspectors and submitted to the Department, which had it under its consideration. On page 248 of the Blue Book hon. Members will find what one of the Inspectors says on the subject. I think it bears out what I have stated. The Inspector says that a few schools offered to teach Gaelic as a specific subject; but the pupils only numbered 39. He adds that the conditions of the examination were of an unsatisfactory nature, and that no curriculum was prescribed. I think it is not too much to ask that the Scotch Education Department should put the matter upon a proper footing. This Inspector says, further, that he has never seen a graduated scheme, or had an interview with any school manager on the subject, but that he has not, on that account, refused to examine the pupils, although he adds that he probably ought to have done so. Nor, he says, has he declined to examine any work submitted to him. My complaint is that Her Majesty's Inspector should be placed in such a position. There ought to be a graduated scheme by which to examine the pupils, the same as in any other language, and in the case I have mentioned the Inspector was obliged to put his feelings against his duty as an officer of the Education Department. Then, again, the Inspector of the district should be an Inspector qualified by his knowledge of the language to examine the pupils; and if the Department are of opinion that they cannot draw up a sufficiently good scheme there is a Professor of Celtic in the University of Edinburgh, and a number of teachers with a knowledge of the Highland language who would, I have no doubt, be glad to give their aid in this direction. I sincerely trust that the present state of matters will not be allowed any longer to exist, and I urge upon the Department the necessity of doing something, because it would afford a means whereby the least populated districts of Scotland may be able to earn a fair share of the grant. In that way it would be of great service to the school boards, and would do much to advance the intelligence of the children. Another effect it would have is that it would lead to the development of the national spirit of the people of the Highlands, which I am sure the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself would be glad to see. On the whole, I have to congratulate the Scotch Education Department upon the good work they have done since their separation from the English Department. I see that there are some references in the Report to secondary education, and that the Scotch Education Department goes as far as to provide inspection for secondary schools in Scotland. I do not know that the mere inspection of secondary schools will do much good without some means of providing secondary education being supplied; but it has been pointed out by a gentleman who is a high official authority in Scotland that the secondary schools in Scotland are doing admirable work—such as the High School of Glasgow and the Glasgow Academy. I hope that the Scotch Education Department will be able shortly to deal with secondary education in a better way than now; but I know that under circumstances of difficulty the Glasgow Academy is doing very good work. I know that there are great difficulties in the way, but I think that if my suggestions are acted upon a great deal may be done to further the cause of education in Scotland; and I hope that, judging from the public spirit shown by the Department of late years, they will continue to advance, and that all these points will be given effect to.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): In the Report of the Committee of the Council on Education reference is made to the subject of school attendance, and their Lordships state that there is reason to believe that many boards in Scotland are not carrying out the Compulsory Clauses of the Education Act as effectively as they might. The Report adds that Her Majesty's Inspectors have also been of that opinion for a great number of years. We have had the same complaint detailed in the Scotch Education Department year after year, yet we have not discovered that the Department has ever made any representation to any school board on the subject, or has taken any steps against a school board for not complying with the Compulsory Clauses of the Act. The excuse is that it is undesirable to interfere with the action of the local boards in these matters; but it must be remembered that while the school boards in this matter have the interests of the ratepayers to look after primarily, yet, on the other hand, they get from Parliament over £500,000 for the purpose of endowing education in Scotland; and Parliament, in voting that large sum of money, necessarily looks to the Scotch Education Department as the authority to see that the Act is being carried out, and that compulsory education is being enforced throughout Scotland in the terms of the Act. If they tell us that they do not desire to interfere with the local boards, the result is that Parliament votes the money, and there is nobody taking the interest necessary to see that the work is being properly done. If the Scotch Education Department is not able to do the work, it should see that some other Department is constituted which would; and if the Scotch Education Department have no powers, they should have come to Parliament and asked for powers. The assertion of the Education Department that they have no powers is not an argument which should be held to justify their inaction. It only shows the necessity of a reform of the Department itself, seeing that this is a very important part of their duty that compulsory attendance is not enforced by a single authority; and although there have been repeated complaints, there is nothing to show that the Scotch Education Department have done anything in the matter. Another matter which I desire to bring under the notice of the Lord Advocate is that the Department has not carried out the spirit of the Act of 1872. When that Act was brought in it was on the footing that board schools were to provide for the deficiency of school accommodation. It was not intended to supersede the existing schools, but simply to be supplementary. Now, in 1872, it was found that the non-State-aided schools in Scotland took in a-half of the whole school attendance, while, at present, not one-seventh of the children attending the schools in Scotland are in non-State-aided schools. The result is that non-State-aided schools have been practically suppressed by one-half, and the children have been transferred to the State-aided schools. But the Department compare the numbers in 1872 with the present numbers, and say that the progress made is 125 per cent, while there really is little increase of attendance, but merely a transfer of attendance from non-State-aided to State-aided schools. According to the Census of 1871, there were 543,000 children above five years of age receiving State education in Scotland. Sixteen years have now elapsed, and, allowing for the ratio of the increase of the population during that period at 1·3 per cent per annum, we should have a total, in the present year, of 634,000 children above the age of five years receiving education in Scotland. But what is the result, according to the Report of the Scotch Education Department? It appears that there are only 614,000 children above the age of five years receiving education in the State-aided schools. How many are receiving education in the non-State-aided schools we are not told. That important fact is carefully concealed from us; probably about one-seventh, although we are told that year by year the attendance in the non-State-aided schools has been going down in Scotland. According to the estimate of the Department, there are at the present moment in schools of all kinds 714,000 children above five years of age receiving education in Scotland, 614,000 of whom, although the number ought to be 634,000, ought to have been there if we had never had any Education Act in operation at all. The increase in attendance since the Act of 1871 has really been only 80,000 in a total of 714,000 children over five years of age, instead of the increase of 125 per cent for which the Education Department takes credit. Then another point to which I wish to call the attention of the Lord Advocate is the lowering of the standard of education in Scotland. According to the Act, the standard of education in Scotland was not to be lowered. The standard of education in the elementary schools was not to be lowered; and the education given in the parish schools was to lead directly to the Universities. But we now find it acknowledged for the first time in the present Report of the Department that there is good ground for holding that the fears of those who thought the standard of education in Scotland would be lowered were well-founded. Here, then, is a direct acknowledgment on the part of the Department of what has long been suspected. But why has the acknowledgment been so long delayed? It will be seen that the children are examined in a great number of specific subjects; but the instruction is of the most flimsy character, and the Department now acknowledge that the whole thing is a perfect sham. The lowering of the standard is entirely the fault of the Department, who give 2*s.* for the specific subjects in the first stage, and give the same rate in the second and third stages; and the teacher, who is teaching Latin, French, mathematics, and Greek, gets no more for teaching these high subjects than for teaching the commonest subjects for which the grant is given. In the common subjects he may have 50 in a class, whereas in the higher subjects he may not have more than five or six. The result is that he concentrates his attention on the simple subjects, for which he has large classes, and neglects the higher subjects, for which he only has a few pupils, and over which he would have to spend more time and earn less money. If you wish to encourage the higher education, why not give 2*s.* for the first stage, 4*s.* for the second—where the work is more difficult and the scholars fewer—and 6*s.* for the third stage? In that way the Department would encourage higher education, to a certain extent; whereas, by the method actually adopted in giving grants of equal amount for elementary subjects, they have practically banished the teaching of higher subjects out of the Scotch schools. Then, again, there is the provision that every child must put in 250 attendances at one school in the school year before he can be examined or pass in any particular standard of examination. See how that works. Take the last election in Glasgow for the Bridgeton Division. In that case it was found that out of 10,000 voters in the Division, 2,000 had changed their residence during the year. The time of removal is Whitsuntide, and the time of the school board examinations is the winter—about January; so that when a parent removes from one district of Glasgow to another it is impossible for the child to make 250 attendances before the examinations, either at the school in the district he is leaving, or in the school in the district to which he removes. Consequently, he is unable to pass that year. The child who ought that year to pass Standard III. is thus kept back for a whole year; for the teacher in the school to which he is removed, finding that he has not passed Standard III., naturally puts him into the lower and easier Standard, so as to pass. What is the result? The result to the working classes is that a boy finds himself unable to pass Standard V. when he is 13 years of age, even though he has been regularly at school. When he reaches 13 years of age, he is found to be either in Standard III. or IV., and, consequently, he is unable to go to work, and this is entirely owing to the absurd regulation of the Scotch Education Department that there must have been 250 attendances in one school in order to entitle him to pass a particular Standard. I hold that if a child is able to pass an examination, it should make no difference where he has obtained his education, or whether he has put in his attendance at one school or at three. The result is that we find in Scotland, notwithstanding the efficient school board system which exists there, that however much smaller the percentage of passes is in Standard V. than it ought to be, it is simply owing to the changing habits of the population, and to the child not having been able, in consequence, to pass through a Standard once a-year, however qualified he may be to do so. There is another matter which has been referred to by one of the Representatives of the Highlands, and that is the absurd provision for attendance in the schools in the specified Highland parishes. The school rates have been brought up as high as 5*s*. or 6*s*. in the pound upon the rental value, and the school accommodation provided is double what is absolutely required. The Highland parishes are burdened with enormous local rates; and hon. Members will be aware that one of the recommendations of the Crofters Commission was that some relief should be given to these Highland parishes. But the Education Department have put in an absurd provision, requiring that the grant shall only be given where an average attendance of 80 per cent can be shown. The very districts that most require this help are those which are not able to give the 80 per cent necessary to earn the grant. How is it possible, in these sparsely populated districts, to secure so large an attendance? An average attendance of 80 per cent of the children on the roll is a far higher percentage than is proposed in the case of towns. Before imposing such a condition the Department ought to have considered the character of those different localities, the distances the children have to travel, and various other matters. Every school should be judged upon its own merits as to whether it has fairly complied with the provisions of the Education Code, whether there are peculiar circumstances, and whether the teachers can be shown to have done their best to comply with the provisions of the Code. There is another point in connection with these Highland schools—namely, that in order to obtain the full grant, the teacher must be a University graduate. That is to say, that if the teacher is a University graduate he gets a higher grant than another teacher who is not. Now, that I consider to be most unfair. Having appointed a teacher who may have been working in a school for a considerable number of years, are you to dismiss that teacher and appoint a University graduate, in order to secure the full amount of the grant which is intended to be given for the relief of the Highland parishes? In my opinion it is a most absurd contention, and I altogether fail to see why the Department should insist that in order to get the grant the teacher must be a graduate. A man may be a University graduate, and still not be a good teacher and instructor of youth. I hold that the Education Department should be compelled to take results by examination, and that they have no right to impose a restriction of this kind. Teachers appointed prior to 1872 cannot be dismissed by the school boards, and, therefore, you are refusing them these grants simply because they are unable to comply with the conditions you impose, and which are most unreasonable conditions. A demand is made by the Education Department in regard to school fees. They say that in those districts where the attendance is worst the school fees are hardly recovered at all. That argument, I think, goes completely against them. It means that where there is a bad attendance the people are poor. Parents will not send their children to school if they have not the money to pay the fees, and the poorer a man is the more he is tempted to keep his child at home. Therefore the very poverty of the people tells against them, and it is because they are not able to pay the school fees that they do not send their children to school. But if the school fees were abolished, the parents, feeling that they would be free from any persecution on the part of the school board, would have greater reason for sending their children to school. With regard to Dr. Ker, the Chief Inspector of Schools in the Glasgow district, he receives £900 a-year, on condition of devoting his whole time to the duties of his appointment. The Lord Advocate informed the House yesterday, in answer to a Question, that Dr. Ker also undertakes certain other duties, but that he does so in his holiday time. I was very much surprised to find the Lord Advocate, although he is merely the mouthpiece of the Scotch Education Department in this matter, taking up such a position. Why does Parliament give Dr. Ker £900 a-year and certain holidays? The holidays are given with a view of recruiting him and re-invigorating his health, so that the country shall have the benefit of freshness and vigour when he returns to his duty. Is it fair, then, if the country pays a man for taking a holiday, that he should, in defiance of that, employ his time in another way, and not as a holiday, and make a profit out of the matter? I say that it is unfair that a man getting such a large salary as £900 a-year, together with holidays, at the expense of the country, should be allowed to go away and deprive other people of work who are more needful and quite as capable as he is of performing the work. I am astonished that the Scottish Department should have come before Parliament to vindicate a servant of the Department for availing himself of his holidays in order to perform work of this kind, when he must know very well that the object of the holidays is to reinvigorate him for other work. Dr. Ker is one of the Examiners for the Scottish board schools; but he has been inspecting other schools, and depriving other persons of emoluments which they would otherwise have received. I hold that the course Dr. Ker has pursued is altogether inconsistent with the independent position he ought to occupy as one of Her Majesty's Inspectors, and that he should, at all times, be able to inspect the schools he is directed to inspect by the Education Department without fear or favour. Then, again, he is inspecting schools which he is also required to inspect for the Department—his own schools, in fact—and I maintain that this work ought to be done by an Inspector who has nothing at all to do with the elementary teaching the children receive. It is improper, in my view, that the same Inspector should examine the pupils for bursaries who has conducted the examination in regard to elementary education. If the two things are inquired into by two different Inspectors the work of the school is practically overhauled, and we have the advantage of an independent criticism on the part of a stranger as to whether the school work has been rightly performed or not. With regard to the Education Department itself, I think I have shown to a certain extent that there is need for reform. The Education Department of Scotland is really nothing but the permanent Secretary to the Department. He is the head and soul of the whole affair. It is all very well to send out letters signed by "My Lords," but, after all, it is simply the work of the permanent Secretary. When we take into consideration that we are giving upwards of £500,000 for purposes of education in Scotland, I think there ought to be a large representation of this House on the board in order to see that the money is properly applied. There ought to be a board composed of men to a considerable extent chosen from this House—men who remain in contact with the people, whom the people can approach, and who would take care that the grievances of the people will be considered. At present we receive an official *non possumus* to every request and suggestion that we make. It was complained that Dr. Ker was receiving £900 a-year for doing certain work in connection with education, and that he was not doing it. The answer we got was merely a defence of the conduct of the individual. The Lord Advocate and the other Heads of the Department are nothing more than mere instruments in the hands of the permanent officials. The permanent officials write down the answers to all Questions that are put in Parliament, and the Lord Advocate comes down here and reads them. If we are to have anything like a vigorous administration, we must get rid of the influence of the permanent officials and the *non possumus* which meets us at every step. We ought to have a Head of and an organisation in the Department which will be able to control the official element, and to give due consideration to the different matters brought before it, without being liable to be told at every corner that the work is being done for the officials and not for the country.

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I know the great amount of attention which my hon. Friend the Member for St. Rollox (Mr. Caldwell) has paid to this subject, and he has said many things with which I have much sympathy. But I cannot agree with all he has advanced, nor do I think he has been altogether fair in the amount of blame he has thrown upon the Scotch Education Department. As to the constitution of that Department, it does not become me to say anything, except that I feel sure that the Members of the Privy Council who constitute the Scotch Education Department are not men who are likely to be such mere dummies in the hands of the permanent officials as my hon. Friend seems to think. There is one thing, however, which we may be sure of, and that is they are acting now, and will act in the future, under very vigilant criticism on the part of my hon. Friend and others. My hon. Friend spoke of the Department as having done something like injustice or injury to the schools that were not State-aided. But I think my hon.

Friend has been misled in his argument on that subject. No doubt, there are now in Scotland a comparatively small number of schools that are not State-aided; but the true explanation of that fact is, that there is no reason why any good school should not be State-inspected and State-aided. The aid that the State gives to a school does not interfere with the independence of the managers in anything that is worth maintaining. It leaves the school perfectly free in all that is important, and, at the same time, it insures that there is a thorough inspection by eminently qualified men. I know that after the passing of the Education Act many of the schools that before were not aided and not inspected fell out of the list by their managers surrendering them—not that they were obliged to do so, but that they felt there was no longer any reason for maintaining these schools, considering the provision that was made by the Education Act for others. It must be remembered, too, that the schools established under the Education Act were very much better schools than most of those that had existed before. Since the Education Act has come into operation we have had a very much better style of school. I think there is not much to regret in the disappearance of the great majority of the schools that were not State-aided. I think there are some points in this Report of the Scottish Education Department to which the attention of the Committee should be directed. There is one very startling fact and no explanation has been given of it, and that is the decrease in the night schools. The decrease is very remarkable. During the last six years they have diminished in number from 277 to 166. The average attendance has diminished from 14,297 to 8,759; and the numbers presented for inspection have decreased from 14,809 to 8,120. No explanation is given of this extraordinary decrease, but I believe, to some extent, it is due to the fact that in the early years of the present system a larger number of young children were sent to night schools than are sent now. For such scholars no grant is given, grants only given being in respect of the higher Standards. It is in the higher Standards that these schools are most required. The Report states that a wider range of instruction is now given in the evening schools; and this, it is hoped, will tend to popularise them. This, I believe, is already carried out to a considerable extent. It is in large cities mostly that these night schools are wanted. In Glasgow, which has the largest population of any town in Scotland, there has not been anything like a marked decrease in the evening schools. In that city the evening schools are at present attended by a very large number of pupils, both young and old. In fact, last year the number on the roll in evening schools was upwards of 9,000. In ordinary classes there were upwards of 4,300, and in advanced classes 4,680. About 1,000 of these were men over 21 years of age, and I presume they do not come within the statistics of the Education Department, but belong rather to the Science and Art Department. These evening classes are, no doubt, of immense use in large communities. As example, I may state that in the night schools of Glasgow the presentations in Standard VI. have increased of late years from 268 in 1880 to 803 last winter. The Report complains of the school attendance; and my hon. Friend the Member for St. Rollox has referred to the subject. I think, however, the Department are a little too severe. They seem not to be satisfied unless every child of what is called school age is to be found at school, and they bring forward this rather startling charge against the condition of education in Scotland, that there are 100,000 children too few at school. There are 624,000 on the registers, and the Department say there ought to be 100,000 more. I think that the Department there go a great deal too far. In the Report the result of attendance is stated as follows, that of every 100 children of school age 79 are on the register, and 61 are in daily attendance. Now, the principal explanation why the attendance and the number on the register is so very much short of the number of children of school age is that the Scottish people are not accustomed to send very young children to school, and in many parts of Scotland it is a sheer impossibility. In large towns it is advantageous that little children should go to school, provided there are infant schools for them. We are rather behind in Scotland in the matter of infant schools. We have not infant schools to the same extent as in England. But outside the large towns it is almost impossible—is not desirable—that very young children should be sent to school. In country places I do not think little children lose much by not going to school very early. It is stated in the Report, and stated as a matter of regret, that only 38 per cent of children between five and six years of age are on the register of any school. I think, taking into account all the circumstances, that 38 per cent is not a very bad proportion. But one fact is mentioned in the Report, which is undeniably an unfavourable one, and that is that so many schools are not provided with suitable teachers for the young children. It appears that of 88,000 children under seven years of age there are 48,000, or more than one-half of them, taught by male teachers—teachers, as the Report says, obviously unsuited for such work. Another reason why attendance at schools does not come up to the full standard, is that children are removed to work before they have reached the limit of school age. That is to say, they have passed the Fifth Standard, when it is no longer obligatory on their parents or guardians to keep them at school. It is a matter to be regretted that children should pass off to work at so early an age as they do. The normal age is 12 for the Fifth Standard, but a sharp child can pass at 11, and it is a deplorable thing that a child of that age should be sent by its parents or guardians to work.

Mr. CALDWELL: They cannot be sent to a factory under the Factory Acts under 13 years of age.

Mr. J. A. CAMPBELL: But they can get other work. At any rate, they need no longer be kept at school; and the fact in many cases is that when this stage has been reached the parents think it is no longer necessary to have their children at school. My hon. Friend has spoken of the desirableness of putting the screw on school boards in regard to enforcing more firmly the Compulsory Clauses of the Act. It may be necessary to do something in that direction; but I think it is desirable to adopt a milder method than compulsion where it can be applied. Such a method has been adopted with very great success by the School Board of Glasgow They have offered prizes as an inducement to regular attendance, accompanied with good conduct, and a regular passing of the Standards suited to the stage and progress of the pupils in the school. The result of this prize scheme—and the plan has been in operation for some years—is highly satisfactory. A prize is given to every child in Standard III. and under, who has been in regular attendance with the exception of eight days, and in the higher Standards a margin of only four days is given. In Glasgow, last year, with an average attendance of 42,459, the number who gained the prizes was 13,863. That is to say, nearly one-third of the average attendance secured prizes for regular attendance, satisfactory progress, and good conduct. The prizes for 400 complete attendances were nearly 8,000, and for 370 attendances 5,896. The prizes are small books, and the cost is only about 6*d.* a scholar, but with this very small expenditure a great end has been gained in encouraging better attendance. There is one important feature of the New Code which is noticed in the Report, and which, I think, ought to be regarded with satisfaction by all interested in education, and that is the new system of dispensing with individual examination in the lower Standards. All under Standard III. are subjected to what is called collective examination; and I think there is a general hope that as this system may be found to work well and to give greater freedom, with much less pressure in the schools, it may be extended higher than the Third Standard. There has been considerable improvement in the numbers under specific subjects. I regret that in one respect there has been a going back on the part of the Department. I do not know whether my hon. Friend will attribute this to the fault of the present Department, but it is a misfortune that what was supposed to be a point gained some years ago has been lost, in the matter of schools being restricted to the 9*d.* a-week limit of fees. In many of the schools there is a better education given—that is to say, the higher subjects are more attended to—and the scholars attending are quite willing and able to pay higher fees, and it is desirable to have higher fees—so as not to undersell other schools. But after having for a very short time the liberty to charge higher fees, it was found that there was some difficulty about it, and the old restriction was reimposed. Reference has been made to the examination of secondary schools. That work has only now begun. It has been long of beginning. We had under the Act of 1878 the power, with the consent of the Treasury, to institute the examination, and school boards which had higher schools under their charge have been all along pressing for that examination. It has now been given for the last two years, and this year we have the first Report of a general kind. Thirty-eight of these schools appear to have been examined last year, and the report of their condition is by no means satisfactory. It is not satisfactory—not because the teachers are not doing their best, but because the conditions under which the schools are worked are such as to place them under great disadvantage. There is no doubt that something must be done for the secondary schools in Scotland; but I think, in the meantime, that something must be found in the form of private and voluntary benefactions. These have been given, in many cases, with the very best results. In Dundee, for instance, great assistance has been given to the High School by one or two gentlemen, and the school is now in an excellent condition. The higher schools throughout Scotland have certainly a claim upon the liberality of those who are interested in the promotion of the higher education. My right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate mentioned one very encouraging fact at the beginning of his statement, which I think is an answer to the desponding views some people seem to entertain with respect to the condition of education in Scotland. He said that the rate of grant earned in Scotland this year is higher than that of last year, which again was greater than that of the year before. It was 18*s.* two years ago, last year it was 18*s.* 5½*d.*, and I gather from my right hon. Friend that this year it is expected to reach 18*s.* 11*d.*

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I do not propose to follow the hon. Member for the University of Glasgow (Mr. J. A. Campbell) or the hon. Member for St. Rollox (Mr. Caldwell) into the important subjects they have brought before the Committee. I am afraid that at this period of the Session the occasion is hardly propitious, I will not say for an exhaustive, but even for an adequate discussion of this subject, and therefore I will content myself with calling attention to a matter which is comparatively small, but is not without importance. I refer to the relations between the Inspectors of Schools and the Assistant Inspectors. The Inspectors receive good salaries, beginning at £400 and rising to a maximum of £800. Some time ago it was found that the work was increasing, and Assistant Inspectors were appointed, with salaries rising by small increments from £150 to £300 a-year. But I am afraid there was one difficulty the Department did not foresee—namely, that the gentlemen capable of being Assistant Inspectors are not capable of being full Inspectors. I consider that it is not possible to draw a line of demarcation between the work done by the Inspectors and the work done by the Assistant Inspectors. The result of the present arrangement is that we have a number of men who are perfectly fit to be Inspectors, but who are paid on a very low scale. That is not the worst of it. The Assistant Inspectors are necessarily under the orders of the Inspectors, and there are no sufficiently definite instructions to Inspectors to determine what work should be done by the Inspectors and the Assistant Inspectors respectively. It therefore amounts to this, that an Inspector is provided with an assistant over whom he has complete control, and whom he can make do as much or as little work as he likes. That is a position of matters that is calculated to give rise to serious evils. Human nature, after all, is human nature, and if you provide one man with another to do his work for him there is a natural tendency for the Inspector to make his assistant do as much of the work as possible, and there is a complaint, which I know to be in some cases not unfounded, that some Inspectors, at all events, have been throwing a great deal too much work on the Assistant Inspectors. I may point out that the death rate among Assistant Inspectors during the last three or four years is higher than among the Inspectors. I believe it would be a more satisfactory arrangement if, when an Inspector finds the work too heavy, an additional Inspector, instead of an assistant, were appointed. I do not wish to allude to any particular cases; but I think this is a matter that requires the consideration of the Scottish Education Department, and I hope the Lord Advocate will be in a position to give the Committee some assurance that the question will be seriously looked into with a view to a better arrangement being made next year.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): When last the question of Scotch Education was under consideration in this House, the English Education Vote was then taken, which occupied so much of the time allowed on Saturday, as to leave only 35 minutes for the Scotch debate. This time was spent in the Lord Advocate reading for 10 minutes the useful Memorandum prepared by the Education Department, and my hon. Friend the Member for St. Rollox Division of Glasgow (Mr. Caldwell) employed 18 minutes in setting forth his enlightening views on education. There was thus left only five or six minutes before the Saturday debate closed, and this was used in the debate about the adjournment. Being disappointed in not being able to express my views, and not expecting another opportunity such as we now have, I placed my views before the Secretary of the Scotch Education Department, and I shall only now briefly refer thereto, in the belief that the points I touched upon will be taken up in the next year's Scotch Education Report; and as we cannot possibly expect at this late time of the year that public attention will be directed to the debate today, I strongly recommend my hon. Friend the Member for St. Rollox Division to lay before the Scotch Education Department the heads of the excellent and useful speech which he has just delivered. By that course he will be certain to receive information on the various obscure points he has raised, and draw the attention of the Department to the valuable suggestions he has made. I shall briefly, therefore, now mention the points to which I wish to draw attention. I consider that great advantage will be gained by the School Inspectors being better trained in the way of inspecting the Scotch children. No doubt, the training of English Universities is a guarantee of the Inspector's fitness in some degree; but I am informed that a further training is of vital importance to Scotch schools, by having the Inspectors trained to extract from, often, the apparently, dull children the sound information which qualified teachers have been able to give. Then as regards the teachers themselves, I believe it would be an immense benefit if they were encouraged to keep pace with the progress which teaching is making. I believe that a month spent at a Central Training College, where teachers could be instructed how to teach, would do much to further the progress of education in Scotland. I may also call attention to the disadvantage which children labour under, in having to reckon the 250 attendances at one school. The changes of residence on the part of the parents necessarily force the children to change the school. It would, however, be easy for the teacher to send to the teacher of the new school a report of the progress and of the attendances of the child. There is also a question of importance to poor parents in having to provide a new set of school books for the new school consequent on the books of the old school not being used in the new school. I do not advocate uniformity of books for all schools. That would be too much of the Chinese method; but the books in use in the schools in a district might all be of a uniform kind. From all I can make out, a complete set of books for each child cost nearly £1. This in itself is a sum of importance to a poor man with a number of children, which labouring men of Scotland usually have. I also advocate careful consideration being given to the question of school fees—I believe it would be beneficial to make free education in Scotland. The last point which I wish to raise, and to which I call the serious attention of the Lord Advocate, is the accusation made in the former debate by the right hon. Member for one of the Divisions of Sheffield (Mr. Mundella). In accounting for the largely increased earnings of scholars in Scotch schools as contrasted with the earnings of English scholars, he stated that the Scotch excess was due to the laxness of Scotch examinations. The report of his speech in *The Times*, though not quite so strong as in the words of the speech I heard delivered, is sufficiently strong to bear out the imputation, that the Scotch scholars are less strictly examined than those of England. I therefore strongly advocate a careful inquiry being made as to the correctness of the allegations of the right hon. Gentleman, who, by his former position as the Head of the Education Department of Great Britain, by his zeal and devotion to the education of the country, is an educational authority of great weight. I may conclude by urging the Lord Advocate to bring under the notice of the Scotch Education Department the many useful and important suggestions which have been made in the course of this debate.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The speeches we have heard to-night raise a number of very useful suggestions for the consideration of the Scottish Education Department. With reference to the objection of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Kincardineshire (General Sir George Balfour) to the shortness of the statement I made the other day, at least I can congratulate myself upon this, that my hon. and gallant Friend evidently thinks it was a very efficient statement, from an educational point of view, because he is under the impression that it had been drawn up by some official in the Education Department. I hope it will please my hon. and gallant Friend to know that the statement was drawn up by myself, and embodied my own views. I am not in the habit of having my speeches prepared for me by other persons. In regard to the shortness of time it took to deliver it, I am not sure that the statement was any the less clear on that account. I am inclined to think many of the speeches made in this House would gain in clearness as well as in other respects if people would stick to their notes, instead of wandering into disquisitions upon other matters little relevant to the subject under discussion. I think my statement was a very complete one, and I have not heard any objection to it. I propose now to take up in succession the different matters that have been brought forward by my hon. Friends. In the first place, my hon. Friend the Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark) has called attention to the very large expense incurred a good many years ago in the erection of political schools in the North of Scotland. I dare say the hon. Member will get a good many people to agree with him in that; but I think the hon. Member will also agree with me that that is a thing that cannot now be cured. The establishment that has been built cannot be turned into money, but must be used and held there. The hon. Member has also referred to one or two incidental circumstances that I think are hardly suitable for discussion in this House. One of them is, that at one school the grant has been withheld because the school board did not carry out the direction of the Inspector to have a blind put upon a window. That is very small matter; but if it is the fact that a blind was necessary to prevent the children being blinded, and if it is true that the school board was obstructive in regard to matters of that kind, the gentle hint conveyed by the grant being withheld for some time will probably not be disregarded. It appears that on more than one occasion the Inspector had found the children exposed to the sun, which was blazing in their eyes—a most improper thing, and a most dangerous thing for their sight, as everybody knows—and, consequently, the grant has been withheld. I do not know whether or not there may have been faults on both sides; but, at all events, there is the Inspector's explanation of the facts. My hon. Friend the Member for Sutherland (Mr. A. Sutherland) has made some valuable observations on the question of teaching Gaelic in the Highland schools. I am very much afraid there are two great difficulties in connection with the teaching of Gaelic. In the first place, we cannot get those who are going out into life as teachers to trouble themselves much about Gaelic, and we cannot be much surprised at that when we consider that teachers are so crammed with other subjects that they have little time to devote to the study of a language which they would find of little aid to them, either at the time, or afterwards. It would be a great mistake to attempt to teach Gaelic in the same scientific way as other languages. What is wanted is rather the sort of acquaintance with the vernacular which is picked up by the children from their elders in most Highland cottages, and sufficient instruction to enable them to read the Bible in Gaelic. To attempt to teach Gaelic as a grammatical language, or by means of grammatical treatises, would be the height of folly. But I am afraid the first difficulty I have mentioned is the real one—that we cannot get young people who are taking up teaching as a profession to give sufficient attention to the subject. That is a difficulty that I fear cannot be met by the Education Department. It can only be met by the people themselves taking an interest in the matter, and doing what they can to secure that the subject is adequately taught. In regard to what has fallen from the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division (Mr. Caldwell) on the question of secondary education, I can only say this, that I do not think secondary education has been promoted or stimulated by the passing of the Act of 1872, or any subsequent Act. The whole tendency of the system of compulsory education is to divorce secondary education from elementary education, and to prevent that gradual flow of teaching that used to obtain in the old parish schools of Scotland, and which was so valuable for all classes of the community. I am afraid we may come to a state of things in which the higher classes living in the outlying districts of the country would be unable to get from the teachers of the district that secondary education which they used to get from the parish schools, and also that the masters of board schools will not be stimulated to give the extra time—for it only is in extra time that it can be done—to those of their elder pupils who have the taste and time for higher education. There are great difficulties in the matter, and I do not think they would be at all met by a certain number of shillings being given for particular branches of education. The only way in which you can have this done is for the schoolmaster to make it one of his highest ambitions, not only to educate the children under his charge up to a particular low Standard, but also, while not neglecting that duty, and doing it efficiently, to give some of his time—leisure time, it may be—to higher education among those of his pupils who have the time, the talent, and the health to undertake it. I do not see how it can be done by attempting once more to graft secondary education on the existing compulsory system, and attempting to make it a means of stimulating secondary education within the school itself. With regard to the secondary schools, I think they are doing now what is the only thing they can do, looking to the divorce which has taken place between elementary and secondary education within the schoolroom. They are doing what they can to encourage the secondary schools that exist, and to stimulate them to greater exertions and greater success. That is an experiment that has been, up to a certain point, successful, and I trust in the future that it will be more successful still. The hon. Member for St. Rollox has also referred to the attendance in elementary schools, which is, no doubt, to a certain extent, defective. But it is not so defective as in some other places. I think that at a time when we are able to show substantially increased results, and especially in the most difficult districts, the hon. Member's words may be taken, not so much as words of condemnation, as a stimulus to us to do better if we can. No doubt, there has been a great improvement in Returns, and the Department have the matter thoroughly before them, and are thoroughly impressed with the importance of it. If they have been able to secure improved results in some of the most difficult districts, they may hope to do still more in the other parts of the country. I sympathize with my hon. Friend the Member for the Universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen (Mr. J. A. Campbell) in the opinion he has expressed that to hope to reach a very high percentage of attendance in the case of very young children is not a thing that any Department can look forward to. We might introduce any compulsory system we please, and exercise the powers of the law by inflicting imprisonment; but if we began to imprison large numbers of parents we should have exactly the same thing as we have had in connection with vaccination. We should have a public outcry against it. We must not press a law of this kind too far, above all, in the case of extremely young children. I sympathize with my hon. Friend when he says that in Scotland, at all events, it was not the practice in times past to send the children too young to school. I am not sure that education has not often been begun too soon by fixing one age at which a child ought to go to school. We would not do it with regard to any animal that we had to train. There are many children who are more fit to be educated at five than others at six, and I am very much afraid that our insisting on a hard-and-fast line would result in injury as well as failure. In that, of course, I am only expressing my own opinion, and I am bound to say that a contrary opinion prevails in the country—namely, that every child of a fixed age should be compelled to go to school. As to the non-State-aided schools being crushed out, that was the natural tendency of the Act of 1872, because when people felt that they were paying rates to provide education for the whole nation they were indisposed to put their hands in their pockets and pay for the education of their children in other schools, when they could receive a highly efficient education in the board schools, under the best monitory and other arrangements. My hon. Friend complained that the Department have concealed the facts as to the condition of the attendance in the non-State-aided schools. I think that arises from the fact that they are very carefully concealed from us. There is a great tendency on the part of the non-State-aided schools to avoid publicity.

MR. CALDWELL: What I said was that in regard to the City of Glasgow the School Board have given a complete statement of the annual attendance, and I asked why the Department should not do the same thing?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: That takes the ground away from my hon. Friend's complaint, if it does not altogether remove it, because he has the figures, so far as Glasgow is concerned. My hon. Friend spoke of the number of children in attendance, and said it was not what it ought to be. There is a great deal of truth in that, and speaking generally upon the question I may say that it is a matter of considerable difficulty to bring the attendance up to what it ought to be. I can only say that in this respect we are progressing. Another matter referred to by my hon. Friend at the beginning of his speech was the lowering of the Standard and the schools not being feeders of the University. With regard to that I can only say that it is the real defect of the compulsory system of our elementary education, which does not tend to promote in the elementary schools the progress of higher education. A complaint has been made about the arrangement of the Department, by which the attendance of the child at school must be an attendance at the same school in order to obtain the grant. The matter has been fully represented to the Education Department, and is now under their consideration. That is a matter of great importance; but I believe it has been represented to the Education Department, and is now receiving careful consideration. A complaint was also made by the hon. Member for the St. Rollox Division with reference to placing on the additional grant which is given to the sparsely populated parts of the country the condition that they must show 80 per cent of attendance before they can receive that additional grant. I think the hon. Member would not have been so severe if he had known the actual result which has followed from the system. It has had the effect of stimulating larger attendance, and of giving to those sparsely populated districts an additional grant to the extent of £3,000 during the last school period. I think that is a very satisfactory result. Possibly the percentage may have been placed too high; but the population, instead of being a moving population, is a population always on the spot, and if a child once begins to attend school regularly there is no reason why he should not continue to do so. And so far as the children themselves are concerned, they are strong and healthy and are capable of using more exertion in reaching school than children who live in the large towns. The main point, however, is that 80 per cent has been reached, and these schools have increased the grant by £3,000. My hon. Friend also entered on the great question of the abolition of school fees. I will not enter upon the discussion of that question at the present time. It does not affect Scotland alone, but is a general question, about which there is a strong and vehement difference of opinion. Therefore, it would not be wise to refer to it now. The question of Dr. Ker has also been brought up. I admit to my hon. Friend that the information on which I answered the Question yesterday was derived from officials of the Department. My answer was not argumentative, but was simply as to certain matters of fact in reference to which I could get the information in no other way than from officials of the Department. My own opinion is that it would be unfortunate if a gentleman who is in a distinguished position as regards education should be so restricted in his holidays as not to be allowed to devote part of his time to doing some efficient work which does not interfere with his official duties. I do not suppose that Dr. Ker, the Inspector, spends the whole of his holidays in doing other work. Like a sensible man, he gives some of his time to reasonable recreation; but I do not blame him for devoting some of his holidays to a higher class of work. It is complained against the Scottish Education Department that it consists of the permanent Secretary to the Department. I hope hon. Members will not believe that important matters are not discussed by the officials, and that they have not a legitimate and proper influence on the Department; and if my hon. Friends would convey to me their ideas on different matters, they will find that that is a very good way of influencing the officials of the Department. The hon. Member for Aberdeen and Glasgow Universities (Mr. J. A. Campbell) expressed his regret at the diminution of the night schools in Glasgow and other parts of the country. There can be no doubt that these night schools are decreasing; but at this period, 15 years after the passing of the Education Act of 1872, just what we might expect to find is occurring, because when we have got the system of elementary education well established in the country, the result must necessarily be that a great many more children are getting their elementary education in their young days. It is not so necessary now for young people to attend night schools, because the great mass of the population have received their training and education in the elementary schools before reaching an age when people generally attend these night schools. Therefore, I think the diminution in the number of persons attending night schools is not an unmixed evil. I think it is to be accounted for, to some extent, by the fact that the education given in these night schools is becoming a higher education, which necessarily catches a much smaller proportion of the population than elementary education would do. I think it is a marked want that we did not get a sufficient number of efficiently trained female teachers for the very young children in infant classes. Everyone acknowledges that the influence of a woman on very young children with regard to their manners, morals, and education, is much more efficient and effective than that of a man. For one man who has the capacity for dealing with children of tender age, there are dozens of women who have it. I think it is a defect in our elementary system that we do not train young females for this special work. I suspect that the teachers that are chosen for teaching very young children are chosen simply because they are believed to know a great many things, without any test of their capacity for that sympathetic mode of dealing with young people by which alone they can be led happily into the first course of their education. If we endeavour in our Training Colleges to find out the young women who are best suited to this work, I believe it would be a happy thing for ourselves, a happy thing for the children, and a still happier thing for the community. There is only one other subject I desire to refer to, and it has reference to the remarks which fell from my hon. Friend the Member for the Edinburgh University. With regard to the question about the ninepenny limit of fees, we got great advantages from the belief that we have the power to charge a higher fee in the State-aided schools; but it has now turned out that, for technical reasons, we have not that power. It is just one of those instances that has so often happened in this House. A clause was put in the Act, at the instance of the late Mr. Duncan M'Laren, but in such a fashion that it has not proved effective. With regard to the question of Inspectors and Assistant Inspectors, I can assure my hon. Friends that it will receive careful consideration. The hon. Member has also spoken about the number of books and the expense of the books which are used in the schools, and there I am bound to say that I rather agree with him. I think the expense and number of books is a great disadvantage, and that the number of books is especially so; and I believe it would be more for the advantage of the children themselves if we were to have a system under which there were fewer books used and more instruction given by teachers in the schools, and less learning of lessons at home. That, I think, would be greatly to the advantage of the elementary education, and contribute as well to the future health of the population. Then my hon. Friend has remarked that we get our extra grants in Scotland by insufficient inspection; but I think we can answer that by pointing to the work done by Scotchmen in after life whether they are as well educated as Englishmen or not. I have now only to thank the Members of the Committee for the kindness with which they have received my statement, and to assure them that the questions which have been raised in the course of this discussion will receive the earnest consideration of the Department.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I only want to ask one question—namely, who is the Head of the Scotch Education Department? We know very well that the Committee of Council for Education in Scotland contains some very eminent men; but I wish to know whether the Board is a dummy board or not—whether the Secretary for Scotland, in his own person, is the sole Board, or whether the eminent men whom I have referred to as being on the Committee of Education are members of the Board? We have on the Committee Sir Francis Sandford, a man of Scotch breeding, and a man of immense knowledge. We have, also, the Lord Advocate himself, a most able Scotchman, and I am sure that those who have listened to the right hon. and learned Gentleman will agree that he has vindicated himself of the charge of having acquired this knowledge of the Education Department from books; the right hon. and learned Gentleman has shown in his speech to-day great knowledge of the subject, and great sympathy with the questions that have been raised; and I want to know whether Sir Francis Sandford, the Lord Advocate, and the other able members of the Committee of the Council for Education are, as I have said, dummy members, or whether they take an active part in the management of Scotch Education—or is it the case that the only real Head of the Board of Education for Scotland is the Scotch Secretary himself, aided and abetted by the President of the Council?

MR. A. SUTHERLAND: Before the Question is put from the Chair, I should like to remind the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate that he has taken no note of what I said with regard to the results obtained by undergraduates as compared with those by graduate teachers. I quite agree with the right hon. and learned Gentleman's remarks on the subject of instruction in Gaelic, and now that we have it conceded as a specific subject, I hope it will have a fair chance. It has been said that although it has been conceded the subject has not been taken up; but I wish it to be put in the Schedule with the other subjects, and then if we see that it fails, there will be no reason for raising further arguments on the subject.

DR. CLARK: I am not altogether satisfied with the reply of the Lord Advocate as to the action of the Department in the case of the school board in my own locality. It is one of those inaccurate replies that Departments usually give. I have some correspondence here between the school board and myself regarding it, and I have to tell the right hon. and learned Gentleman that I shall bring the matter forward again rather than have £100 taken off the salaries. I wish to refer to a subject which last year I pressed on the attention of the Secretary for Scotland — namely, the very great grievance that the undergraduates in Scotland have with reference to their grant. You take these men, you educate them and give them a certificate that they are perfectly qualified to teach everything that is required to be taught in the elementary schools; and there is another class of men whom you do not examine and know nothing about so far as their qualifications are concerned. The latter are appointed as teachers, the class of subjects is the same, and the results are obtained by the same Examiners; and you give to the men you know all about 4*s*., and to those you know nothing about you give 10*s*. No doubt, there are some managers who prefer to take a man with a degree; but the effect of the present system is that the men who take your certificates are being shunted out and graduates are taking their places. I say you are acting unfairly towards a class of men whom you have yourselves certified to be efficient, and hence their complaint. Increase your own men's qualifications if you like, but I say that you ought to give them the same rights as graduates. I hope the right hon. and learned Gentleman will be able to give us an assurance that he will alter this arrangement next year, otherwise I shall be obliged to divide against the Vote.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: In reply to my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs, I may say that I have referred to a very valuable work, *Whitaker's Almanack*, and I am happy to assure him that the members of the Scotch Education Department are not "dummy" members. I find that the Board consists of the Lord President of the Council, the Secretary for Scotland, the Secretary for the Home Department, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the right hon. Sir Francis Sandford, and myself. I have been at several meetings, and four members have always been present; Sir Francis Sandford and myself were there, and I have seen the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for the Home Department present. The Board does not meet only in Council; it considers every question. With regard to the point mentioned by my hon. Friend with reference to the teaching of Gaelic, I had already taken a note of it, and it will not be lost sight of.

Vote *agreed to.*

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £12,018, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for Grants to Scottish Universities."

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I regret that the Secretary to the Treasury is not present on this occasion, because I have to make one or two remarks which I am sure will be grateful to his ears as custodian of the public purse. I have to refer to the sums paid at the Scotch Universities for assistants of Professors. Now, there is no part of the money voted by Parliament to Scotch Universities which is more beneficially applied than that which goes for the payment of the Professoriate. But when some classes in the Universities become very large, enormous salaries, comparatively speaking, are obtained by fees from the students in those classes, and it seems to me that when the question of Scotch Universities comes up, the Treasury should consider the propriety of making the grant depend on the total amount which the Professors get. Take the case of Professors who receive £1,000 a-year and over. I find there are no fewer than 10 Chairs in Scotch Universities which return over £1,000 a-year to the Professors. This sum is largely in excess of the usual pay of Scotch Professors, and £100 is granted by Parliament to each of those 10 Professors for assistants. I venture to think that when the emoluments of a Professor exceed £1,000, he might very well provide the necessary assistance out of the excessive fees which he gets. That would give £1,000, which would be sufficient to endow five new Chairs at £200 each. I think that £200 would be found to be sufficient for the endowment of some Chairs which are urgently wanted in the Scotch Universities. Having called attention to this subject on the ground of usefulness and economy I wish to say a few words with regard to another possible reduction of this Vote. I refer to the sums voted for the Theological Chairs in the Scotch Universities. I have often felt that when Scotchmen have appealed to the Exchequer for Grants in Aid of Scotch Universities, there was one weak point in their case, because the English Nonconformists might turn round and say that before any additional money is given to Scotch Universities, the money already given should be applied to proper University purposes, and not to the endowment of denominational education. The amount voted by Parliament is not in itself large, but it amounts to one-seventeenth part of the entire Vote for Scotch Universities, and the other item which I have referred to is not an inappreciable amount. The reason why I think that Parliament should not grant any money for Theological Chairs in the Scotch Universities is that in the course of events the Scotch Theological Chairs have ceased to be what we may call open Chairs, and they are practically used for the training of young persons of one Presbyterian denomination. The authorities of the Free Church require that all ministers of their bodies shall be educated at the Theological Colleges, which they themselves provide by voluntary subscriptions. The members of the United Presbyterian Church also provides the necessary training for their ministers, and the result of this is that the Scotch Theological Chairs are practically confined to the preparation of candidates for the Established Church. It seems to me, holding as I do the principle of equality, with regard to religious endowments, that the present system is inconsistent with the principle of equality. There are some persons in Scotland who entertain the view that, although at the present time these Chairs are practically confined to candidates for the ministry of the Established Church, some possible changes may take place, and that at some future time the Theological Chairs may be available for the teaching of all ministers in Scotland as was the case before 1843. It does not seem to me that events are tending in that direction at the present time; and, that being so, I wish to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £1,000 in order that there may be an opportunity of dividing on and testing the principle involved, and I do so on the grounds both of economy and equality.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £11,018, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: There are two points referred to by my hon. Friend the Member for Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) in connection with this Vote, one of which is the emoluments of assistants and Professors. That is a matter which, of course, has already come under consideration in the proposals for University legislation, but I will point out this—that in proposing to make the Professor pay the sum voted by Parliament for an assistant, my hon. Friend ought to keep in mind that as regards a great many, if not all, of these assistants, the Professor could not keep them on the sum voted by Parliament In most cases £100 a-year to get the sort of man capable of being a really efficient assistant for these important classes is not enough; and not only is that so, but the Professors are also in this position, that although they get £100 to provide one assistant, which is not sufficient for the purpose, they have further to provide for assistance out of their own pockets, because, with only one assistant, they cannot possibly carry out the work of their Chairs. Then with regard to the Professors of Divinity and cognate subjects, I think my hon. Friend has done all he intended to do by bringing up this matter on the present occasion. It is a matter which cannot be properly discussed at the present moment. The question is a large and important one, and must also, to some extent, come up on the question of University legislation, and I am therefore not prepared at the present moment to enter into it. My hon. Friend has made his protest against the application of this money; but, at the same time, he is aware that it is the actual position of things at present, and we are not at this time in a position to alter it. The matter, notwithstanding the fact that I am not prepared to enter upon it now, is one that will certainly have to be considered; but I hope my hon. Friend will excuse me for going into it on the present occasion.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I quite feel that it is impossible at the present time to deal with the whole question of the Divinity Professors at the Scotch Universities, although it is one which I think we shall have to deal with at a future day. But I want to say a word on the special case of St. Andrews. The Professors' case is that their incomes are almost at starvation point. It seems to me, quite apart from the general question of whether we ought to have a State-supported Church, that it is great folly that the Professor in Arts and Science should be starving while we keep up so liberally the Professors in the Divinity and Medical Departments, in which you have scarcely more students than Professors. It seems to me that there is not that demand for ministers of the Established Church of Scotland which would justify the keeping up of the divinity classes in the four Universities. My own opinion is that, unless an arrangement can be made with Dundee instead of enlarging the medical schools at St. Andrew's University, the proper course would be to abolish both Divinity and Medical Schools, and apply the money voted for them to the purpose of raising the status of the Professors in Arts and Sciences in respect of salary.

Mr. HUNTER: I do not at all object to the tone in which the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate has met me on this question. I am perfectly aware that we are not in a position to find a satisfactory solution of the question on the discussion of the Vote before the Committee; but, at the same time, the only way in which we can formally raise the question in the House is by taking a Division on the Vote, and accordingly I shall do so on the present occasion.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 31; Noes 105: Majority 74.—(Div. List, No. 456.) [7.25 P.M.]

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) £1,300, to complete the sum for the National Gallery, &c., Scotland.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): There is an item in this Vote for the Board of Manufacturers about which I should like to receive from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate some information. We in Scotland do not know much about this Board, and I should be glad to hear from the right hon. and learned Gentleman why the Board of Manufacturers exists, and what it is they do, so that we may understand on what the money now asked for is spent. I think the whole Vote requires some explanation.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: This money is voted in connection with a number of institutions in Edinburgh for national purposes concerned with manufactures and arts. The Board of Manufacturers has under its charge large art collections and the School of Design, and there are buildings to be kept up, such as the National Gallery and the new National Portrait Gallery, the funds of which are provided by a private benefactor, while the maintenance is taken over by the State. There are, also, various matters connected with the School of Art and Design, and Science and Art Department. I will give one instance. The present staff sanctioned by the Treasury consists of a certain number of officials—a head master, assistant master, female teachers and curators, involving expenditure to the amount of £1,190 per annum. Then there are the expenses of the National Gallery and of the Museum of Antiquities; and there are prizes and various other things. The Board is working very efficiently, and having been a member of it for many years, I am able to say that it is very actively carried on, and is doing extremely good work.

MR. MASON: I think there is no necessity to press this inquiry any further, being satisfied with the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

(6.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £14,416, be granted to Her Majesty to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, in aid of Colonial Local Revenue, and for the Salaries and Allowances of Governors, &c., and for other Charges connected with the Colonies, including Expenses incurred under 'The Pacific Islanders Protection Act, 1875.'"

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: In order to get some information, I intend to move the reduction of the Vote by several items which it includes. I shall first move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £1,500, being the amount under Sub-Head A for half charge for the steamer on the West Coast of Africa, because it is the only way in which we can get to know what is going on in that part of the world. I want some information as to the nature of our proceedings on the West Coast of Africa. We have had a number of Blue Books which, in one sense, give too much information, and in another sense too little; but it is rather hard to get at the true gist of our proceedings in Africa. We have had statements made in the press and by the Chamber of Commerce in London and elsewhere, complaining very much that we do not annex the interior districts of Africa, or bring them under control so that our trade there may be extended. It is noticeable that those who impress on Her Majesty's Government the necessity of undertaking this work, do so, not so much for the purpose of keeping alive the Natives as for the purpose of trading with them. It is for this reason that Her Majesty's Government have been strongly pressed to establish dominion on the West Coast of Africa. I should like to know what operations are in contemplation by Her Majesty's Government, and whether they have in view the protection of the lives of the Natives or the promotion of trade by bringing under control large tracts in the interior of Africa. I should, also, like to be told something of the position of the Royal Niger Company to which a charter has been granted for the purpose of enabling them to establish large dominions in the interior of the Continent. I know it would be out of Order to go into this subject in detail; but the Vote being for the West African Steamer, I think we may ask to be told, in the fewest possible words, whether we are establishing dominions in Africa by means of a Chartered Company or otherwise?

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A—West Coast of Africa Steamer—be reduced by the sum of £1,500."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): I understand that the hon. Gentleman opposite has moved the reduction of this Vote, not as really desiring to reduce the charge on account of the West Coast Steamer, but simply for the purpose of raising the question of the proceedings of Her Majesty's Government in Africa. I am very glad to be able to give some comfort to the mind of the hon. Gentleman. I, myself, although I think I should have heard of these rumours if there had been any foundation for them, have not heard anything of the kind, and I can assure the hon. Gentleman that there is nothing in contemplation by Her Majesty's Government in the nature of extension of dominion on the West Coast of Africa. The Government sufficiently appreciate the responsibilities which this country has already undertaken in so many parts of the world and are not at all inclined to increase them. The only matter going on at Lagos now, which I hope will receive a peaceful and friendly termination, is a discussion as to the boundaries between some of the Native tribes, ourselves, and the French; but there is no reason to apprehend any serious difficulty on the point. With regard to the last question raised by the hon. Gentleman, I can only repeat that we have no intention of in any way extending our power on the West Coast of Africa.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

DR. TANNER: (Cork Co. Mid.): I rise for the purpose of moving the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £1,000, being the amount charged in connection with the salary of the Governor of the Island of Heligoland and other matters. This Island seems to me a sort of bathing machine, situated in the German Ocean; and it would be well if it were a bathing machine and nothing more. But it is more than that. It is understood by the German people merely as a menace to their trade and Mercantile Marine sailing out of the port of Hamburg. We have heard in past years that there was an intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government, in the belief that it would be desirable to conciliate Germany, to give up this island to the great country to whose shores it is contiguous. The Governor of the Island, whose name is O'Brien, states in the Report that the prosperity of the island is increasing, for the bathing season has been an exceptionally good one. But who is most interested in this Island; is it Great Britain or is it Germany? We are told in the Report that the majority of the visitors come from Hamburg and Bremen. The Government say that business men can run over from these places, and that the comparative success of the Island may be due to the completion of the railway to Cuxhaven. The Report, which is most amusing, is a curiosity in itself, and it tells us that the only event of political importance during the year was the visit paid to the island by their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. On this occasion the Government House was repaired, and the furniture, which is more than 24 years old, has been re-covered—an example of economy to Her Majesty's Government. The Governor has been also obliged to supply glass, plate, and crockery, so that the post of this unfortunate gentleman is really no sinecure. I think if we look into these matters we shall see that, although the cost is not large, it would be well to cut it down still farther; and, having regard to the fact that the German people do not like the English occupation, I think it would be better if the island were once for all handed over to the Power off whose shores it lies.

You tell us that the fishery is a success; but there is another point to which I wish to call attention. In dealing with the Postal Savings Banks, the Government tells us that it is very difficult to expect to get anything like progress out of Heligoland. The place does not appear to have been of any advantage whatever, and, moreover, England is placed in a false position by holding the Island. It is all very well to pass this Vote, as has been the case in years gone by; but I think that the time has come —seeing that you are asking the assistance and intervention of Germany in foreign affairs, and that you are constantly appealing to Germany as arbitrator in European matters when you want to secure a technical advantage—when you should give to Germany this little island. She wants to get it, and certainly I do not think that Great Britain cares very much about it. No one can land there; the island, as the Governor states, is merely a bathing place; you cannot get any shelter under the island, and therefore what is the use of keeping the cost of this small but typical White Elephant on the Estimates? I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Colonies will give us some explanation of the cause why Heligoland is still an appurtenance of the British Crown, otherwise I shall feel it my painful duty to divide the Committee against this Vote.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item C — Heligoland — be reduced by £1,000."—(*Dr. Tanner.*)

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Sir HENRY HOLLAND): The reason why this Vote is put upon the Estimates, and why we still hold Heligoland, is that this country is not prepared or desirous to part with it. I would remind the hon. Member that more than once the question of handing the island over to Germany has been raised in this House; and every time the hon. Member who made the proposal has met with a very decided rebuff. I must add that I have no information, and do not believe that Germany is very anxious to take Heligoland. I am not aware of any past negotiations or proposals for its surrender, at all events of any recent date. But without going into the question whether Heligoland is of use to the British Empire for defensive purposes, upon which, for reasons which the Committee will appreciate, it will not be desirable to enter, I must state that it is not the intention nor the desire of Her Majesty's Government to part with Heligoland to Germany. I have some difficulty in dealing with the speech of the hon. Member for Mid Cork, for the hon. Gentleman seemed to dislike the prosperity of what he called a mere bathing machine. I am glad to recognize that prosperity, and to be able to state that notwithstanding the smallness of the Island and the shortness of the bathing season, there is a distinct and increasing improvement in the financial condition of the Island. This year there is a decrease of £2,500 on the Vote of last year, and £800 of the amount now asked for is for the salary of the Governor, which is to be reduced when the present Governor leaves his post. Considering the importance of the place, it is not too much to ask the Imperial Government to pay £1,275. I really cannot assent to one of the reasons assigned by the hon. Member for handing over the Island to Germany—namely, because it is mainly kept up by people who cross over from Cuxhaven and Bremen to bathe. To sum up the matter, I may state that the Government are not prepared to hand Heligoland over to Germany, and that they have kept the expense to the Imperial taxpayer down to the very smallest amount. Great credit is due to the Governor for his care in closely watching the expenditure, and improving the resources of the Island.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I think the right hon. Baronet has proved too much in saying that we have reduced the expenditure on account of Heligoland. Last year we paid off an amount of original debt, and that is a fact which seems to me to emphasize the contention of the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner), that this is an unnecessary charge on the British taxpayer. I believe that on the whole face of the earth there is not a possession more absolutely useless to us than this Island; or an occupation more unjustifiable than the retention of Heligoland.

DR. TANNER: Of course, if the right hon. Gentleman desires it, I shall be happy to withdraw my Motion. At the same time, I cannot help repeating the remark that this island is simply held as a threat and menace to a country which it is incumbent on us to treat in a fair, proper, and judicious manner.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: We have never received from Germany any complaint of that kind, and there is not the slightest foundation for such a statement.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I must now move the reduction under Sub-head M of £250, part of the salary of the Deputy Commissioner of New Guinea. With regard to the last reduction which I moved, I am glad that the Secretary of State for the Colonies was able to give me very satisfactory assurances. I am afraid, however, that with regard to the question which I now bring forward, it will not be in the right hon. Baronet's power to give assurances equally satisfactory. I have placed this Notice on the Paper in order to bring to the notice of the House the policy which is being pursued by Her Majesty's Government in connection with New Guinea. I am very much afraid that Her Majesty's Government have committed themselves to annex this enormous territory and hand it over to Queensland. That is a course which I very much object to—first, on the ground that it is an unjustifiable extension of the Empire; and, secondly, on the ground of risk and cost. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone) has told us how dangerous it will be to extend too rapidly our Empire, and go beyond our resources; and although I admit that the right hon. Gentleman has found occasion to make considerable exceptions to his rule, yet this proposal for extension has been steadily opposed by successive Governments. The Secretary of State for the Colonies, I know, disputes the fact that the British Settlements Bill which has been put before the House is really one intended to facilitate annexations. But I altogether dissent from that view, and confidently assert that in certain cases there is an enormous extension of powers which will enable Her Majesty's Government to annex new territories. I will not go further into that point now, but will refer presently to the case of extension with regard to which I have placed a Notice on the Paper. One measure of Her Majesty's Government is that the High Commissioner shall register claims for land over which Her Majesty has no dominion. Up to the present time Her Majesty's Governments had steadily resisted that proposal. I am quite aware that the registration of claims to land beyond the Dominions of Her Majesty would not constitute title; but, on the other hand, it seems to me to be a great encouragement to men to get marketable claims improperly, and to involve considerable danger. My second objection to the Vote is that the Government propose practically to hand the territory over to Queensland. Sir, I hold a very strong opinion upon that matter, and I object to handing over in this way the government of Native races. I hold strongly that if we will take territory containing Native races we have certain responsibilities to assume. I hold that it would be most wrong, most base, and cowardly to shirk these responsibilities. We have taken under our dominion these Native tribes, and I say it would be base to shirk the responsibilities we have thereby incurred, and to hand them over to any Colony that may want to take them. I think that a course of that kind is not only wrong on our part, but is also bad for the Colonies themselves. I believe it will be an evil day for the Australian Colonies if, in addition to their wide Dominions, they have attached to them a kind of Black Southern States, which we know imperilled the position of the United States of America. We are often told when we raise objections of this kind—"Well, but these Colonists whom you seem to distrust are our own flesh and blood." No doubt they are our own flesh and blood; but it must be borne in mind that the Australian Colonists are situated very differently from ourselves. They are a very sparse population, and are distributed over an enormous tract of country; they are not a solid population like ourselves. They are a population made up of enterprizing and ambitious men—men in these days largely given to speculation, anxious to make rapid fortunes, and very desirous of accumulating these fortunes by means of speculations in land. An eminent authority upon these matters, who lately visited that country—namely, Baron Hubner—noticed this circumstance. He says, referring to the constant cry amongst our Colonists in that part of the world for annexation in the Western Pacific—

> "The cry for annexation in the Western Pacific and elsewhere is a craze which is accounted for by the wants of speculators continually in quest of lands to buy and sell."

My view is that if we must take possession of these Native territories we are bound to protect the Natives, and the dictum of a very eminent statesman in years not very long gone by was this—

> "Where large numbers of Natives and a small number of Whites are brought together under one Government, their control should be entrusted to an authority directly responsible to the Imperial Government, and able to bear itself impartially between conflicting interests."

In this case of New Guinea it seems to me we are altogether transgressing the most wholesome rules of the great statesmen who have gone before us. I think that the proposed annexation of New Guinea, which involves the handing over of it to Queensland, is altogether an unjustifiable proceeding. This territory to be annexed in New Guinea is an enormous one, probably as large as France and Germany put together. It is a territory utterly unknown to us. We know it is inhabited by an interesting and comparatively civilized people. Let me quote a few words from a most attentive observer, Captain Bridge, R.N., who says with regard to the character of the people of New Guinea—

> "Throughout the parts of New Guinea with which I am acquainted the inhabitants are ingenious and industrious agriculturists, and carefully fence their plantations. Their houses are large and well built. They make very fine fishing nets. Their canoes are of an enormous size, and the trees are procured a long way off. Pottery is made in large quantities for export."

I might read many more extracts; but I will not at this time of day trouble the Committee with more. I think that extract is quite sufficient to show what kind of people they are in New Guinea, and I say to annex these people without in any degree attempting to obtain their consent in a most unjustifiable proceeding. I am aware that we do not make a bare and simple present of New Guinea to Queensland; but I am also aware of the fact that indignation meetings have been held in that Colony in order to force the hands of the Government in regard to the annexation of New Guinea, and the Colonists have forced the hands of Her Majesty's Government. Now under a very thin veil of reservation we are yielding to their demands, and are practically handing over this great Island to the Colonists of Queensland, who, by their persistency, have succeeded in getting their way. I admit that the Colonists are our own flesh and blood. Speaking as a Scotchman, I may say that they are specially my own Scotch flesh and blood; but still they are enterprizing and ambitious speculators, as I have said. I must speak plainly in regard to this Colony of Queensland, and I must say that it is specially unfortunate that this territory of New Guinea should be handed over to this particular Colony, and for two reasons. The first is, that Queensland is deeply dyed in that horrible Slave Trade in the Pacific—in that horrible system of kidnapping of which we have had the amplest evidence in the Papers produced before us. I say that New Guinea is deeply dyed in that very criminal Slave Trade which has taken place for years past in the Pacific; and if it were necessary I could read many extracts to show how barbarous that trade is, and how terribly it is disfigured by crime. All who have taken an interest in this matter—and I should think everyone in this House has—must know very well how bad that trade has been. Therefore I say that this Colony is not one which should be entrusted with this great extent of territory, and with the government of this interesting and pacific people. Another reason I will give in support of my view is, that Queensland has attempted to force our hands in regard to the annexation of this territory in spite of the prohibition of Her Majesty's Government, and that the Colony practically proceeded to bully us into giving them their own way. The Colony has got its own way in spite of the remonstrances of this country; it has got the control and the administration of New Guinea in spite of the deliberate opinion expressed by successive Governments of this country. This transaction has taken place without giving Parliament any opportunity of expressing an opinion on the subject except this miserable opportunity which we have to-night. Practically Her Majesty's Government have surrendered it to Queensland. There is to be an Administrator of New Guinea; but he is to be under the Governor of Queensland and under the Executive Council of that Colony. I do say without reservation that with the exception of the thin veil of protection afforded by this country the control of this territory is to be handed over to Queensland, which I think is a most unjustifiable proceeding. I will once more quote Baron Hubner, who, speaking of our relations with the Colonies and our habit of yielding to them, says—

> "Recent requests for the annexation of New Guinea made again and again were at first categorically refused by Lord Derby, then gently put aside and ultimately admitted in principle."

Baron Hubner said that in the very early stages of these proceedings; and, that being so, I wonder what he would have said after the Government have adopted the action they have in regard to New Guinea. The terms agreed upon are practically a surrender to Queensland. They were proposed by Queensland—even the reservations were proposed by her. The plan adopted is altogether Queensland's plan, and I say again that it is one taken against the better judgment of Her Majesty's Government. I think the present Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) was formerly Secretary of State for the Colonies. I wish to quote what he said on the subject a very short time ago. I find that the Secretary of State for the Colonies has expressed himself distinctly upon this subject so lately as December last. He said—

> "Her Majesty's Government have very carefully considered the New Guinea Correspondence, and desire to state frankly their opinion on the Colonies' proposal. The establishment of sovereignty over New Guinea involves the possibility of very heavy expenditure, and is not necessary for the defence of Australia from foreign aggression."

That extract will be found in the Blue Book—Proceedings of Colonial Conference, vol. 2, page 200. It is a telegram of the 3rd December, 1886. Well, Queensland was not satisfied. They were determined to have New Guinea, and now it appears they are going to get it with a small reservation which I think will be soon swept away when this country happens to come into collision with the self-governed Colony. We dare not attempt to hold our own against them. Queensland and the other Australian Colonies are very cautious in this matter as people who know they will get all their own way are very apt to be when they make a bargain. They have made one of the character of "Heads I win, tails you lose." They have carefully limited the amount they are to contribute towards the expenses of the new territory. They have undertaken to expend £15,000 a-year on the Government of the territory; but they have been careful to limit the sum to that amount, and to make it clear that if the £15,000 is not sufficient, and any financial difficulty is encountered, the British taxpayer will have to supply the deficit, and bear all the necessary burden. From the same publication from which I have already quoted the present Secretary of State for War, when Colonial Secretary, said—

> "The Gold Coast and Lagos expenditure is £150,000 a-year, and New Guinea might cost more."

If New Guinea did cost more than £150,000 the Colony of Queensland would contribute £15,000, and we should have to contribute all the rest. I hold that the bargain we have made with the Colony of Queensland is one under which they get all they desire, and we run the risk of incurring a loss. I stoutly maintain that, as the British Settlements Bill is not passed into law, under the present law we have no power to annex this territory and turn it over to Queensland. I hold that under the existing law we cannot do this thing.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: The Law Officers whom we have consulted are of opinion that there is not the least doubt about New Guinea being a British Settlement when sovereignty was declared.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I beg very humbly to differ from the right hon. Baronet. Her Majesty's Law Advisers gave the opinion that the territory when annexed must be taken to have been acquired as distinguished from conquest or cession.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: Their opinion was that Her Majesty's Government must be taken to have the power they have exercised in the matter.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Then read the passage from the Blue Book.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: There is no passage in the Blue Book on this point. The opinion I am referring to is not a published opinion.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I can only go on the opinion that has been published, and in this passage to which I refer the Law Advisers of Her Majesty advise that under the present law we can only treat the territory as a British Settlement, as distinguished from a territory obtained by conquest or cession. You cannot say that this country has been conquered, because it has not been conquered; and you cannot say it has been ceded, because it has not been ceded; and, therefore, you cannot treat it from any of those points of view. If Her Majesty's Law Advisers say that we are already entitled to treat this as a British Settlement, why did you place such an unnatural definition in your British Settlements Bill at present before Parliament?

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I admit, Sir, that I shall not be in Order in going into the question of the British Settlements Bill; but the right hon. Baronet, by his interruption, rendered it almost necessary for me to say a word or two on that subject. The opinion which the right hon. Baronet says the Law Advisers have given him is not before the House; and I trust he will permit me to say that I hope Her Majesty's Government will in the Bill propose a clause for the purpose of——

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I must rise to Order, Sir. I must protest against the hon. Member going into these matters, because I shall be unable to follow him. I think, Sir, it is quite irregular, and I may add that his statement is altogether incorrect.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I will merely say that, in my view, Her Majesty's Government are not entitled under the existing law to treat New Guinea as a British Settlement, to annex it, and to deal with it under that title. I deny that anyone who reads the present Falkland Islands Law regarding British Settlements can come to any other conclusion than that the British Settlements therein referred to are *bonâ fide* British Settlements, and not constructive unnatural British Settlements. I have not got the Falkland Islands Law by me just at this moment, because I did not expect that we should have this clashing of opinion. There are two laws on the subject—one of which recites that Her Majesty's subjects have resided on the Falkland Islands and certain portions of the West Coast of Africa, and it is necessary to make laws for such subjects; and they, therefore, recite that Her Majesty has a right to make laws in those Settlements. Then you have another law, which professes to amend the Falkland Islands Law, and says that the same laws shall apply to British Settlements in every other part of the world. In any common-sense point of view, can you say that this great unknown and unexplored territory is really a British Settlement? It is a Settlement that is really not settled at all. You have half-a-dozen settlers, probably in different parts of an enormous territory; but it is a fiction and a perversion of the plain meaning of the Statute to which I have referred to treat New Guinea as a British Settlement. I am free to say at once that, whether it be legal or illegal to treat this territory as a British Settlement, as a matter of expediency, I, for one, should not object to what I may call a nominal annexation which shall enable us to assume jurisdiction along the coast in order to keep off marauding foreigners and to protect the Native tribes in the interior. If we are prepared to do that—if we are prepared to assume responsibility—if the British Crown and the British nation are to be responsible in a matter of this kind, though I may think it illegal to treat the territory as a British Settlement, I should not say that it was altogether inexpedient. I do not object to a nominal annexation of this kind, provided we are prepared to act on the doctrine that the Imperial Government shall be bound to bear the responsibility of conducting the government of the territory and to hold the balance between the Colonists and the Natives. But I hold that you are departing from that principle; and I say that by so doing you are inflicting the greatest injustice on the Natives. In handing over the control of the territory to the Colony of Queensland you are guilty of a most unjust proceeding. The proper course to pursue is to follow the advice that your own Commissioner—Sir Peter Scratchley—gave, when he said—"New Guinea must be governed for the Natives and by the Natives."

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: Hear, hear!

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I am delighted to hear the right hon. Baronet say "Hear, hear!" and one might assume from that that he is going to adopt that policy. I say, however, advisedly and deliberately, that, in my opinion, the right hon. Baronet is doing nothing of the kind. He is going to basely surrender the Natives, whom he ought to protect and to enable to govern themselves, to the Government of Queensland. He is going to appoint an Administrator, who is to be under the orders of the Executive Government of Queensland; and I repeat again that whenever we come into collision with these self-governing Colonies in these days, the tendency is for the Mother Country to go to the wall, and for the Colony to have its own way. I believe the Government has departed from the principle of governing New Guinea on the system I so much desire to see adopted, and which the Colonial Secretary seemed to approve—namely, by the Natives for the Natives. I protest against the course which the Government are about to adopt; and, in that view, I beg to move the reduction of the Vote.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Item M. 1—Salaries—be reduced by £250."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: The hon. Member has repeated over and over again that the Government are going to hand over New Guinea to Queensland; indeed, the whole of the hon. Gentleman's argument was based on that assumption. That assumption is entirely incorrect; and it follows that the whole of the hon. Gentleman's argument, from beginning to end, so far as it was based upon that assumption, is incorrect. The Government are not going to hand over New Guinea to Queensland. Anyone who takes the trouble to read the discussion upon the question of New Guinea at the Colonial Conference, and who studies the Schedule of the Queensland Bill, which provides for the expenses of the government of British New Guinea and the mode in which the territory is to be administered, must see that this country keeps New Guinea entirely in its own hands. I will not detain the Committee by quoting these passages, but only refer them to the Colonial Conference Papers (Vol. 2, p. 210). There is really no foundation for the contention of the hon. Member that we are practically going to hand over New Guinea to Queensland. It would not be unnatural that—looking to the trade through Torres Straits—the Australasian Colonies should desire to see in British hands the land on the other side of the Straits; and the feeling is not confined to Queensland as to the desirability of claiming Sovereignty over New Guinea. The feeling is universal throughout the Colonies of Australia; and, with the exception of South Australia, they are all ready to subscribe towards the expenses of the government of New Guinea. Therefore the hon. Member is wrong when he assumes that Queensland alone is interested in New Guinea. It is by no means clear that the other Australasian Colonies would be prepared, even if Queensland desired it, to see New Guinea handed over to Queensland. The hon. Member has thought fit to go back to the old complaint of the ill-treatment of Polynesians in Queensland. The hon. Member must be aware that a Commission was appointed, at the instigation of the Queensland Government, to examine into the charges, and that the whole system has been changed. Many Natives have been returned to their own Islands, and everything has been done by the Queensland Government within the past year or two to conduct the system on a proper footing. I am the more surprised at the hon. Member bringing this question forward now, because I read, a short time ago, a book entitled *The British Empire*, written by a Sir George Campbell. The writer of that book admitted that Queensland had turned over a new leaf, and that practically the Colony was now free from those charges. Of course, I do not wish to put too much weight on the authority of that writer as against the views of the hon. Member; but still I think it right to quote his opinion. The hon. Member seems to think that Her Majesty's Government have made no provision for the Natives of New Guinea. But I would refer the hon. Gentleman to page 210 of the 2nd volume of the discussions at the Colonial Conference. He will see there that paragraphs 9, 10, and 11 most carefully protect the Natives in regard to the buying of land by private persons; the prohibition of the deportation of Natives except under Ordinances reserved for Her Majesty's assent; and trading with Natives in arms, intoxicants, &c., was absolutely prohibited except under Ordinance reserved for Her Majesty's assent. In short, every protection was given to the Natives, and I am convinced that this measure will be one of undoubted benefit to them. The hon. Member also seems to think that the Government have pursued a different policy from that of their Predecessors. This is not the case. In 1881 the assistance of the Imperial Government to support the Protectorate was recognized by Lord Derby. My immediate Predecessor, the present Secretary of State for War, was of the same opinion, as was shown by his telegram of August 14, 1885, in which he said Her Majesty's Government were willing to proclaim a Sovereignty upon certain conditions therein specified. There was considerable discussion as to those conditions both before and at the Colonial Conference; but in the end there was no material variation between the proposal approved by my Predecessor and the present arrangement. I do not know that there is anything more to answer, because the whole point of the hon. Member's speech is that we are handing New Guinea over to Queensland, and that I have denied. I will not now enter upon a discussion of the British Settlements Bill, although I must say that the hon. Member's statement of it is profoundly incorrect. I say now, as I have said before, that New Guinea does not come under the head of conquest or cession, and that it is a Settlement; and I would point out that parts of it along the sea shore have been for some time past inhabited by some British settlers. It is a British Settlement, and subject to the Act of 23 & 24 *Vict.* c. 121. With regard to the point as to registration of land purchases in the Western Pacific Islands, that subject was also brought before the Colonial Conference. All other countries are allowing registration of purchases of land by their people—Germans, Dutch, and French—and why we alone, of all countries, should not allow our subjects to settle in these Islands, and have their titles registered, does seem to me unaccountable. That change has been made, and I have to assure the hon. Member that if it had been done long ago we should have been saved a great deal of trouble in Samoa and other places.

MR. W. A. M'ARTHUR (Cornwall, Mid. St. Austell): I entirely dissent from almost every view of the hon. Member behind me (Sir George Campbell). I happen to have been born in Australia, and to know something about the Australian Colonies. I know very well the extreme difficulties which surround our dealings with the Western Pacific Islands. I know, especially with regard to the last point mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman—that is to say, the registration of claims to land in the Western Pacific—that the want of such registration has for years stood in the way of the settlement of the Islands there. I know that the want of such a system as this has for years past driven away legitimate English business from the Pacific, and I think that the arrangement which has been brought about is one of the greatest boons which could have been given to the mercantile community of Australia. I differ also from my hon. Friend in his estimate of the treatment the Natives are likely to receive under the authority of the Queensland Government. Only so lately as last year I was all through the Northern part of Queensland, and I saw a good deal of the Black labour there, and I must say that I never saw a more cheerful, contented, and hardy-looking lot of men in my life. During the last four or five years these men have been taught that they are under the protection of the Government of this country. They are aware of the fact that they have absolute protection against their masters. No foreman upon any one of the estates upon which Black labour is used can give any one of his labourers half-an-ounce of tobacco less than his proper weekly ration without having a complaint made and the whole thing thrashed out. These men are now thoroughly independent of their masters—more so, in fact, than are the men in trades unions here—and they are better looked after than our ordinary English workman. Then I also entirely differ from the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy on the whole question of annexation in the Western Pacific. The only regret I feel with regard to our Possessions in New Guinea is that they do not extend over the whole Island. I think it is out of the question that we could ever contemplate the possibility of the Australians remaining content to have around them a large territory which may be taken at any time by any other Power without making some attempt themselves to become possessed of such territory. I think that the extension contemplated by Her Majesty's Government is good for the Natives, for Australia, and for the British Empire; and I sincerely hope that, so far from the Colonial Office being discouraged in the policy they are pursuing, they will do their best to extend as far as possible the authority of England over the Western Pacific.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I should like to make one or two remarks upon this important question; but as it is very late in the Session it is my intention to make these observations of a very brief character. With regard to the subject of the New Hebrides——

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: There is a Motion before the Committee for the reduction of an item relating to New Guinea.

THE CHAIRMAN: Unless the hon. Member (Mr. Webster) intends to deal with the question of New Guinea he is not now in Order.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland): Will the right hon. Baronet the Secretary of State for the Colonies state to the Committee the nature of the titles he refers to for the registration of which facilities have been granted?

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: As a rule the land is bought from the Natives, and up to the present time there has been no means of registering titles to land so bought by British subjects. It is of extreme importance that when land is bought there should at once be a registration of title, otherwise difficulties arise. At the present moment in Samoa there is trouble arising between German and British subjects from want of this registration.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: The right hon. Gentleman, in the speech he addressed to the Committee, narrowed the points upon which I spoke very much. He has brought it to this issue—Is this a surrender to Queensland, or is it not? He says it is not, but I say it is. If the right hon. Baronet will refer to the documentary evidence bearing upon this matter he will find that the Governor of Queensland is directed to consult the Executive Council on all matters relating to New Guinea. The case that the right hon. Baronet referred to, of the Governor of South Africa being also the Governor of Bechuanaland, is an entirely different matter. I quite admit that all the Australian Colonies are anxious that we should take some step in regard to the annexation of New Guinea, because they are anxious to keep the Germans out. That I admit, and I do not object to the assumption of a Protectorate over New Guinea; but what I do object to is the turning this territory over to the administration of Queensland, which, in spite of what the right hon. Baronet has said, I do respectfully urge upon the Committee is not the right authority. The right hon. Baronet must have a very short memory with regard to this Polynesian labour traffic; he speaks of it as raking up an old story. If he will allow me to say so, it is a very recent story. I admit that when public opinion was directed to the matter, a great change took place in the condition of things which had previously been a great scandal. A Commission was appointed to inquire into the scandal, and I rely for what I said on the horrible nature of that traffic on the Report of this very Commission. The Report of that Commission showed that most abominable and hateful practices existed. I am not consoled by the assurances we have received from the hon. Member below the Gangway (Mr. W. A. M'Arthur), who represents the Spreadeagleism of Australia. He tells us that not only New Guinea, but the whole of the Islands of the Pacific, should be annexed by this country. I am not so satisfied as he is that the people he would thus place under allegiance to Her Majesty would be so satisfied with the arrangement as he would be. I am not so satisfied with the capacity of Queensland for treating Native races with consideration as is the hon. Member. The man who has committed a serious offence may repent and may be reclaimed, but you would not on that account make him your son's tutor. The Commission to which I have referred exposed great and terrible iniquities; but even now I almost doubt whether full justice has been done to the Natives. There were most terrible and horrible crimes. There was a crime as horrible as any which ever disgraced humanity. I refer to that of a slave dealer who ran down a vessel of Natives, and caused those who were endeavouring to save themselves to be shot. The perpetrator of this crime was tried for murder, and convicted; but I do not know that he has been executed. I trust that these iniquities and crimes do not exist now; but still I cannot accept the doctrine that a Colony reformed in these respects is one to which you ought to entrust the care of Natives, as in the case of the inhabitants of New Guinea. I admit the reservation of the right hon. Baronet; but my argument is that when you have these enterprizing gentlemen in North Queensland—the gentlemen who hold indignation meetings, and who desire to speculate in land in New Guinea—when you have these gentlemen pressing Her Majesty's Government bit by bit you will find your reservations disappear, and bit by bit you will find that the dominion will fall into the hands of Queensland. I think that such a thing would be very bad for the Natives, for the Colony of Queensland, and for the Empire. The right hon. Gentleman says that we are protected for a period of years by the undertaking of the Colonies to pay £15,000 a-year towards the expenses of New Guinea. I deny that that guarantee is any protection at all, for in the event of Native wars £1,500,000 might have to be spent in place of £15,000, and for every penny of that the Home Government would have to be responsible.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: I referred to the expenses of administration.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Yes; but if you go beyond this £15,000 for wars or any other purpose, we, the taxpayers of this country, will have to pay, and not the Colonies. And now just one word about the subject of the registration of titles. It is all very well to say that these lands, the title to which is acquired, are bought from the Natives. But the question is, how is it bought, and who are the Natives from whom it is bought? I have had a great deal of experience in connection with matters of this sort, and I know there are very frequently questions to be gone into as to the outs and ins of the titles of the Natives themselves. There are many Natives whose titles are repudiated by their own people, and these are the people who try to bring in the strangers. I do not care what the French or Germans or Americans or any other people do; but I contend that we are bound to look after the honour and justice of Her Majesty's Government. I say that it is a most serious thing for this country to arrange for the registration of these titles, which, in nine cases out of ten, are, in all probability, of a most rotten description. I will not withdraw my Motion, as I think it is a right one; but as I do not wish to put the Committee to the trouble of a Division I will allow it to be negatived. I am not convinced —I am of the same opinion still.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I wish to say a word in support of the views of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy, but on somewhat different grounds from those taken up by the hon. Member. My opposition to the proceeding to which the hon. Member has called attention is, that I am very much afraid that it is one of the greatest dangers to our Empire. In my opinion one of the greatest dangers which we have to face is this constant extension of the Empire. Nothing tends more greatly to weaken an Empire than unwieldy development in distant parts. All these extensions mean expense—mean drafting soldiers into the new territories to take care of them. I think the whole thing is dangerous, and therefore I protest against these continual extensions. Especially do I protest against our having one code of morals in the East, at the Cape, and another in the West. That which we are ashamed to do at the Cape we should also be ashamed to do elsewhere. I must say I think that the course we have taken in connection with New Guinea will lead us eventually, as a similar course in other parts of the world has done, into great trouble, and involve in serious difficulties those who come after us.

Dr. CLARK (Caithness): I have seen something of this "blackbirding" in the Pacific, and I know something about Queensland's connection with it, and I frankly admit that in the past there was a good deal of murder and piracy and crime of the deepest dye. I know that it was the rule that where Natives died before a certain period their wages died with them, and that while this practice prevailed it was remarkable what a large number of Natives succumbed before the time arrived for them to draw their wages. I have known schooners go down with crowds of Black men on board. I know something about the Kanaka races, and I like them very well—indeed, I think they are amongst the best peoples in the world. Whatever the law may have been in the past, it is now modified, and the planters are now glad to treat the Natives who work for them much better than the Irish tenantry are treated, or than the Scotch crofters are treated, or than the workpeople in large cities in this country are treated by their employers. Queensland stands very free from blame in this matter now, and I do not think we have a right to throw stones at her at the present time. Of course, we must be ashamed of what took place there; but we must not lose sight of the fact that a great many of the ruffians who were guilty of the worst atrocities were Germans, and were not Englishmen or Britishers. As to the argument of the right hon. Baronet, it is thoroughly illogical. I am thoroughly opposed to extensions of territory under the Colonial Office; but I have no objection to extensions under Colonial Governments. I have no objection to Queensland, at its own expense, annexing New Guinea; but I object to annexation being carried out, and the administration of New Guinea being undertaken at the expense of this country, seeing that Queensland will get all the benefit. In cases of this kind, whether you make these territories Crown Colonies or self - governing Colonies, the feeling of the Colonists is carried out; and, that being so, how can anyone complain? If a Colony is dependent on the Mother Country for assistance in time of need, it is to some extent careless with regard to the difficulties it gets into, and the expenses it incurs; but when it is thrown on its own resources it thinks twice before it does anything that will bring about Native wars or anything of that kind. Remember the history of New Zealand. As long as the New Zealand Colonists had the Colonial Office to fall back upon they had never done with Maori wars, and this country spent hundreds of thousands of pounds upon them; but as soon as New Zealand was made responsible for its own affairs it is remarkable to observe how it has abolished the necessity for wars. Wars are expensive, and the Colony cannot afford them. Government is not carried on so stupidly by those who have to pay for it as by those who have nothing to do but reap the profit, the expense being paid by somebody else. The hon. Gentleman (Sir George Campbell) seems to have a notion that all the Colonists are bad. Well, I myself have had very often to attack Colonists; but I must say that if the hon. Member had come into contact with savage or semi-savage races, he would probably have shown as much bias as many of the Colonists have shown in their dealings with these peoples.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): With regard to this territory of New Guinea, I think that the Government of this country has in the past been somewhat neglectful of the interests of the Colonists. In my opinion, when Queensland took the step that it did, it was absolutely required, in the interests of the Australian Colonies, that New Guinea should become a part of the British Empire. New Guinea is situated so near to Queensland that to have admitted any European Power there—as I am sorry to say we have done to a certain extent—was nothing less than a great misfortune to Australia. The Dutch were there originally, and they are not an offending people; and I suppose that the portion of New Guinea they claimed they were entitled to claim, and I do not think we could have objected. But it was well known a few years ago that both France and Germany were casting covetous eyes on New Guinea, when the Queensland Government took prompt action by hoisting the British Flag over aportion of the Island. Unfortunately for this country, and for Australia, Germany had anticipated so far the action of Queensland, or rather of the British Government, as to have planted their Flag upon a portion of the territory. That was a great misfortune, in my opinion, to the Australian people; Germany is there on their frontier, and it may prove a source of difficulty to these Colonies, although I believe that Australia has a great future before her. Possibly European troubles may arise out of Germany having got a footing in that part of the world—a footing which they ought never to have had a chance of securing. In my view, the Government would act wisely in asserting their position, so far as they possibly can, not only with regard to the British territory in New Guinea, but in taking care that Germany shall have no more of the Island than is absolutely required, and that energetic measures will be taken in support of the Australian Colonies with regard to the New Hebrides, which is a very serious matter just now. I know from personal experience of these Colonies the great inconvenience that Australia is put to through the scum of Europe being sent out to the New Hebrides from France. A great deal of annoyance is caused to the inhabitants, and I trust that Her Majesty's Government will be energetic in saying that the Queensland people shall be sustained in their efforts to prevent any more land than is absolutely necessary being acquired by foreigners in order to keep our European neighbours from Australian waters. I trust Her Majesty's Government will always be prepared to assert their position on behalf of the Australian Colonies.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): On the Item for the office of the High Commissioner, I should like to refer to a matter which falls within the cognizance of the Western Pacific High Commissioner. He appears to have vested in him a Protectorate of the Natives, and, amongst others, of the Natives of the New Hebrides. Now, in 1878 there was a mutual agreement come to between Her Britannic Majesty and the Government of France that these Islands were to form a neutral territory which neither France nor England should occupy. This agreement was ratified in the year 1883, and yet I find that so lately as 1886 the Governor of New Caledonia despatched a frigate to the New Hebrides with troops and stores on board, in direct violation of the agreement between Great Britain and France. Now, Sir, this violation of Treaty——

THE CHAIRMAN: I must say I fail to see the relevancy of the hon. Member's observations to this Vote.

MR. WEBSTER: The object for which these Islands were so occupied, Sir, will form my reason for mentioning the subject. The occupation of these islands is, in the opinion of the Australian Colonies, for the purpose of forming a syndicate to allow on these Islands a convict or *récidivist* settlement. Further than that, in the opinion of the Australian Colonies, the Presbyterian ministers who are at work amongst the Natives at the present moment will be very greatly injured and very greatly damnified if this project is carried out. As I said at the commencement of my remarks, the High Commissioner has power over these Natives, and I venture to urge that in no respect should his power be affected by the Government of France taking or usurping his position——

THE CHAIRMAN: The High Commissioner has no jurisdiction in this matter.

MR. WEBSTER: I venture to point out that if he has no jurisdiction, he is responsible for the Natives in districts where there are British interests.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: The Islands the hon. Member is referring to are not under his control at all.

DR. CLARK: I should like to put a question to the right hon. Baronet with regard to the affairs of Tonga and the doings of the ex-missionary, Mr. Baker, who, acting through old King George, who is merely his tool, is inflicting great cruelties and injuries on the Wesleyans in that island. This is not the first time that Mr. Baker has been creating all this disturbance down there. When the Wesleyans dismissed him from his position as missionary five or six years ago, he had a warning; and now, after the murder of these unfortunate people, to which attention has already been called in this House, merely because they were Wesleyans, he again received a warning at the hands of Her Majesty's Government. Surely we ought to go further than that. This man, acting ostensibly in the name of old King George, who is a man of about 90 and who is merely his tool, is carrying on depredations with impunity. I think he ought to be tried for murder, and deported either to this country or to Australia.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I fully admit the great importance of the subject which has been brought under the notice of the Committee by the hon. Member; but, at the same time, I must remark that Her Majesty's Government have given it very grave consideration.

Sir Charles Mitchell was specially appointed to inquire into the whole subject, and went, accompanied by his Legal Adviser, Mr. Clarke, the Chief Justice of Fiji, to examine into the whole question. Sir Charles Mitchell, who has throughout acted in a spirit of absolute impartiality, and with great tact and judgment, examined a large number of witnesses on both sides, besides hearing Mr. Baker himself, as well as King George. Having thoroughly investigated the matter, Sir Charles Mitchell recommended that Mr. Baker should not be deported, but should be warned, together with the King, that they must take means to preserve peace. That Report has been presented to Parliament, and I will, therefore, content myself with reading one paragraph—namely, 68—

> "The conclusion to which I have arrived is not favourable to Mr. Baker, although great allowances must be made for the difficulties of his position. . . . I should undoubtedly have exercised the power vested in me of prohibiting Mr. Baker from remaining in Tonga for a period, had it not been that I felt that his presence with the King would, after the warning which my visit to Tonga had given, be the best means of preserving peace."

In these circumstances, I do not think that I should be justified in overruling Sir Charles Mitchell's opinion until a strong case is established on the other side. I have caused Mr. Baker to be informed that Her Majesty's Government strongly disapprove the course which he is shown to have pursued of late years in Tonga; that he must remember that, as a British subject, he is under the jurisdiction of the High Commissioner; and that in the event of any further ill-treatment of the people of Tonga being found to be traceable to his influence, it may become the duty of the High Commissioner, without further delay, to put in force the powers under the Western Pacific Orders of Council. A similar warning has been conveyed to King George. I trust, therefore, that the hon. Member will see that Her Majesty's Government have carefully considered this matter.

DR. CLARK: What the right hon. Baronet states happened some years ago—that is to say, the same warning was conveyed to Mr. Baker; but nothing came of it.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I can only say that Mr. Baker has now had a final warning.

MR. ROUND (Essex, N.E., Harwich): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) a question which I hope he will see his way to answer. It is whether any further Papers will be submitted to Parliament in connection with the recent events in the Island of Mauritius? I am sure he will agree with me that events of a very grave character have taken place recently in that Island, and that the Government have come a very important decision there.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I have given very full and grave consideration to this matter, and have arrived at the conclusion not to present any further Papers on the question to Parliament. I am extremely grateful to the House for the confidence which it has placed in me in regard to this subject, and to hon. Members for not pressing me to present Papers. Since arriving at the decision I have mentioned, I have again carefully considered this matter, and am absolutely satisfied that it is not desirable to lay any of these Papers on the Table. Grave charges and counter-charges were bandied about during the proceedings. Many of these were collateral to the issues which I had to try, difficult and important as they were; many were based upon hearsay evidence; and the persons who have been charged have not had an opportunity of either explaining away the evidence or defending themselves against it. The Committee will, I think, under the circumstances, consider it unfair that these charges should be published in a Parliamentary Paper without any statement from those who are affected by them being appended. In the interests of peace and order in the Colony, I am satisfied that I have adopted the proper course. It is in the highest degree desirable not in any way to diminish the chance of removing any ill-feeling which exists between the opposing parties. The best course to adopt is to give the Governor a fair chance of restoring the confidence of the people in his administration, and if I presented the Papers to Parliament that chance would, I believe, be greatly diminished.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: With reference to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Henry Holland) I have only one question to ask. I should like him to tell us how he is going to dispose of Mr. Clifford Lloyd?

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(7.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £48,180, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for certain Charges connected with the Orange River Territory, the Transvaal, Zululand, Bechuanaland, the Island of St. Helena, and the High Commissioner for South Africa."

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I desire, in reference to Sub-Head A, to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Colonies for some information with respect to the allowance in consequence of giving up the Orange River Territory. If my historical memory does not fail me, I think the territory was given up 40 years ago. I should have thought that if we had given up territory we ought not to be called upon to pay anything for doing so. Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us how long this payment is going to last?

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: The British sovereignty over the Orange River Territory was proclaimed in 1848, but was revoked and abandoned in 1854 for reasons which I need not enter into. But I may say that an enormous cost to this country was incurred by maintaining dominion over this territory, and there was constant liability to frontier contests. When it was abandoned, compensation was given to various persons who suffered in consequence of the abandonment. The annuities, which amounted to £48,316 have been reduced to the present sum.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I have given Notice to move the reduction of the Vote by £2,099, being the compensation for the abolition of office in the Transvaal, merely in order to enable me to ask the question what these compensations are? Possibly the right hon. Gentleman may be able to afford us some satisfactory explanation.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item B—for Salaries—be reduced by £2,099."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: When the Transvaal territory was retroceded to the Boers and became the South African Republic compensation had to be given to those gentlemen who were in office there under the British Government, and whose services the South African Republic did not desire to retain. Mr. Gurdon, now Sir William Gurdon, was sent out by the Treasury with the object of, among other things, going thoroughly into the cases of these gentlemen, and of considering what compensation should be given. The sum included in the Vote is the compensation allowance of these Transvaal officials—five in number—whose services the Boer Republic did not retain, and who had such length of service that the Government could not deal with them by giving a gratuity, as was the case with some of the other officers. I am quite ready to show the hon. Gentleman the Report of Sir William Gurdon; but I do not think the Committee would desire me, at this late hour, to read out extracts from it. I have no reason to suppose that these officers did not do their duty thoroughly to the British Government in the Transvaal. Therefore the Government cannot fairly deprive them of the pensions which their services entitle them to receive.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I am very distrustful on the subject of compensations, for there are no greater abuses than those connected with the matter of compensations. I should have been very glad if the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Henry Holland) had told us who the five gentlemen are.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I said I would not trouble the Committee with the details of Mr. Gurdon's Report. I can, however, if the Committee wish, detail the services of these gentlemen. I have offered to show the hon. Gentleman the Report of Mr. Gurdon, and I can hardly think the Committee would care to hear the details.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Is Sir Theophilus Shepstone one of these gentlemen?

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: Yes; and the sum allowed him is £326 per annum.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Then I beg to withdraw my previous Amendment, and to propose the reduction of the Vote by £326, being the amount of pension paid to Sir Theophilus Shepstone.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I must protest most strongly against this grant to Sir Theophilus Shepstone. Sir Theophilus Shepstone was the gentleman who led us into all this trouble. He abused the trust reposed in him by annexing the Transvaal, and led us into the difficulty in which we now find ourselves. It is monstrous that the British taxpayer should be charged with a pension to this man. I am sure I need not trouble the Committee with any further words upon this subject.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item B—Salaries, Transvaal—be reduced by £326, Compensation to Sir Theophilus Shepstone."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

DR. CLARK: There is one important point upon which I should like some information, and I have no doubt that you, Sir, will be interested in knowing something about it, as you have occupied the position of Secretary to the Treasury. I understand that, some time ago, the Treasury surcharged Sir Theophilus Shepstone with a very large amount of money that he was supposed to have misappropriated, or not properly accounted for, while Administrator of the Transvaal. I think the money was put down by Sir Theophilus Shepstone and his sons to forage, and the forage consisted of vases, and combs, and brushes, and fishing-rods, and the like. The late Liberal Government surcharged Sir Theophilus Shepstone, and his pension was stopped for the purpose of the repayment of this money. I understand that since then the pension has been given back to Sir Theophilus Shepstone; and I should like to know the reasons why the action taken by the previous Government in compelling Sir Theophilus Shepstone to pay back money he and his sons had taken from the British taxpayer for fishing-rods, and vases, and other articles, which were put down to forage, has been reversed? Sir William Gurdon, when he examined the accounts, found that these were the articles of which the forage was composed; and you, Sir, when Secretary to the Treasury, made some very strong observations upon the proceeding. I should like to know why this pension has been given back to Sir Theophilus Shepstone, if he has not made good the money?

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: As to an abuse of trust by Sir Theophilus Shepstone in annexing the Transvaal, I cannot possibly argue a question now which has been argued for three weeks together in the House of Commons; but I must remind the hon. Member that, at that time, neither Mr. Childers nor Mr. Forster disapproved of Sir Theophilus Shepstone's action. As to the other point, no doubt the accounts were kept in a most irregular—I may almost say ludicrous—form; but the Treasury and Sir William Gurdon acquitted Sir Theophilus Shepstone of making any charges for money not actually expended. I believe that Sir Theophilus Shepstone has paid the amount which it was at last decided he should pay, and that he is now receiving his full pension.

MR. CONYBEARE: Will the right hon. Gentleman say whether Sir Theophilus Shepstone is receiving anything in the way of salary from any other office?

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I believe not.

MR. CONYBEARE: I hope that if the right hon. Gentleman is not quite certain he will make inquiries. He says he only believes that Sir Theophilus Shepstone is not receiving anything in the way of salary from any other office.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I quite understand the hon. Member, and I will, of course, make inquiries upon the point. I am almost certain, however, that Sir Theophilus Shepstone has paid off what it was finally decided he should pay off, and that now he is receiving full pension.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I am very desirous that we should not deal with this question in the dark. I am very distrustful in such cases as this; but I will take advantage of the offer of the right hon. Gentleman to make inquiries. If, however, I live to another Session of Parliament, I will bring the matter forward again.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I can have no objection to so reasonable an offer.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Under Sub-head C, I beg to move to reduce the Vote by £150, part of the allowance to the Governor of Natal as Special Commissioner in Zululand. I will at once explain my objection to the way we are dealing with Zululand. I am one of those who have always felt that, by the part we took in Zululand, we did injustice to the people. We totally destroyed their Government, and set them by the ears, and made self-government impossible. I do not think we were wrong in annexing Zululand, the more especially as it was not connected with the interior of Africa. My objection, therefore, is not to the annexation of Zululand—it is not to the expense of the annexation—for if Zululand can be administered for £300 a-year the work is done very cheaply indeed. For my part, I do not think it ever will be done so cheaply. It will involve great expense, and I do not think, considering the way in which we have treated these people and the very regrettable change of policy which has occurred, we should begrudge—I, for my part, could not—something very considerable for the administration of Zululand; but I will not go into the question of the administration of the country. My objection to this arrangement is similar to the objection I take in regard to New Guinea—namely, that having taken possession of Native territory, we are making it over to the first Colony desirous of administering it. In Zululand we have not gone quite so far as we have in the case of New Guinea; but we have taken a very considerable step in that direction. What have the Government done? They have taken the first step, and a very large step, towards making over Zululand to Natal. It is proposed that the Governor of Natal shall, in the administration of Zululand, be assisted by an Executive Committee, and that Executive Committee is to be the Executive Government of Natal, *plus* two elected Members. That is to say, you are to have two official Members of the Executive Government of Natal and four elected Members. Sir, I say that this is a very large step towards making over Zululand to Natal, and I am wholly opposed to anything of the kind. The Government of Natal has already enough to do without administering Zululand, because there are now in Natal 30,000 Europeans, about 40,000 Asiatics, and 400,000 Natives. It is an oligarchy in the strongest sense of the word, and I do not think that oligarchy ought to be extended. I think that if the Government wish to take the responsibility of the administration of Zululand they should not seek to make it over to Natal. I suppose that, as the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) has told us, he has not made over New Guinea to Queensland, *à fortiori* he will say he has not made over Zululand to Natal, because he has not gone quite so far. I say at once you have not gone quite so far; but the Natal Colonists are covetous of Zululand; and I think that when we have gone so far as to say that the Governor of Natal is to be assisted and advised in the administration of Zululand by an Executive Council of Natal, the majority of which are elected Members, we have entered on a course which must probably result in the annexation of Zululand to Natal. I say that the Government of Natal is, in the strictest sense of the word, an oligarchy. There is a considerable Indian population there. Up to some years ago a few of that Indian population were entitled to vote. The Natal Legislature got alarmed at so many people of colour having the vote, and under the guise of reform a law was passed by which three-fourths of the Indian voters were deprived of the franchise. I am sorry to say that the Government for the time being were base enough to allow the law to pass, and thus make the Natal Government a very much tighter and narrower oligarchy than it was before. I totally object to handing over to this oligarchical Government control of Zululand.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Item C—Salary, Zululand—be reduced by £150, part of the allowance to the Governor of Natal, as Special Commissioner in Zululand."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): I will not detain the Committee for more than a minute—in fact, I simply want to ask one or two questions. Perhaps I may be permitted to say, in reference to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman (Sir George Campbell), that it would be entirely wrong to allow such a country as Zululand to be annexed to Natal. From a study of the Blue Books, I have come to the conclusion that, so far from Zululand being annexed to Natal in the approximate future, it has been very carefully arranged that Zululand shall remain in the hands of the Imperial Government. With regard to the first question I wish to ask, let me say that I regard the Treaty recently concluded, by which we made over certain portions of Zululand to the new Republic and annexed the remainder, as a mistake. I think that this country has not done all it ought to have done in connection with Zululand. The question I wish to ask refers to the portion of the country which many who are familiar with the subject know as Proviso B. The Boers were allowed to settle there and hold certain farms. There is a great deal of feeling in connection with Proviso B; and many of us believe that that portion of the country, which is perhaps the richest part, and perhaps the most desirable for the purposes of farming, should have been retained for the Zulus. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Henry Holland) whether he anticipates at any time being able to out-purchase the Boers, not by throwing a burden on the taxpayers of this country, but, possibly, by incurring a debt in favour of the Zulus for that purpose? I am bound to say I do not think the right hon. Gentleman will give me a very favourable answer to my question. But I may, perhaps, remind him that, judging from the latest despatches, there is a considerable portion of this Proviso B which has not been occupied by the Boers. Could not the farms which have not been occupied by the Boers be made to revert to the Zulus? It is very important, if possible, that the Zulus should be able to reoccupy the farms which have not been occupied by the Boers, to whom they were originally allocated. Perhaps I may also ask a question in reference to that portion of Proviso B which includes the graves of the Kings. There have been negotiations with the new Republic; but I do not think any decisive answer has yet been given as to whether that portion of the country shall be given up to the Zulus or not. There is a considerable sentimental grievance in the minds of the Zulus about these graves. These are the only questions I have to ask the right hon. Gentleman, because at this period of the Session I do not wish to prolong the discussion.

DR. CLARK: I differ from my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), because I think it will be a wise step to annex Zululand to Natal. At any rate, what we have done is to annex the Zulus to Natal, because 40 years ago there were only 30,000 Zulus in Natal; but now there are 300,000. The Zulus in Zululand number under 100,000; probably there are only 80,000 there. If you want to get a large number of the Zulus back into Zululand, the best way in which you can do it is to annex Zululand to Natal, because Natal is simply a portion of Zululand. Now, as to the policy involved in the annexation of Zululand, I quite agree with my hon. Friend (Sir George Campbell) that we were practically compelled to annex Zululand, or else to suffer the Zulus to be wiped out. Under the circumstances, I think the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Henry Holland) has acted wisely in not proclaiming a Protectorate, but in practically annexing the country. I differed from my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) when he raised this question some time ago, and I wish to express now the view I then desired to express. I think we were compelled, after crushing and breaking down the power of Cetewayo, and refusing to support Dinizulu, to take over the country, or that portion of the country not occupied by the Boer settlers. I do not think the solution arrived by Sir Arthur Havelock is the best for the Zulus. In a former debate I pointed out one or two objections to the course taken by Sir Arthur Havelock. Of course, one cannot get over the difficulty unless by reopening the question. I had hoped the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Henry Holland), who has long been a friend of the Aborigines, would have re-opened the question, especially in regard to the North-Eastern section of the country where Cetewayo's brother has been, and where there are no White settlers. The question which now arises is, what is the future of Zululand to be? The first thing to do is to secure land to the Natives. I hope a Committee will be appointed for the purpose of doing in Zululand what the Boers have done in the Transvaal. I hope you will vest in all the various tribes in Zululand their land, and give them boundaries. I hope you will not allow any White men to acquire any land in Zululand except for a limited period of time, and that the land will be vested in Commissioners for the tribes. The probability is you will have to do something to ease Natal from the great burden of the emigration of Natives into the country. With regard to Proviso B, let me say you have recognized the title of the new Republic, and that whether a man occupies his farm or not the farm is his. The very raising of the question of buying the man out makes the thing impossible. The most important question of all is the reserving of the land to the Natives. Unless something is done, the land will, of course, be got in the usual way, and the Zulus will be robbed of it, as South Africans and others have been robbed of their land before. I hope to hear something from the Secretary of State for the Colonies as to what he is going to do to protect the Zulus in their rights and to get the Zulus back to Zululand.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I should like to know from the right hon. Gentleman what has been done in reference to Usibepu? He was an ally of ours, and yet we allowed the opposite Party to crush him by means of the Boers. I believe he is now a fugitive in our territory.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: The case of Usibepu is under the consideration of the Government, and they are waiting for a further Report from Sir Arthur Havelock. They have offered him a salary, and the question now is whether the Chief can have any territory besides. I am unable to give a further answer at present, but the matter is receiving consideration. In answer to the hon. Member for Caithness (Dr. Clark), I would point out that a Question as to relieving Natal of the Natives is going to be put to me on Thursday or Friday. Many of the Natives who have crossed into Natal during the existence of previous troubles will now, no doubt, be willing to return to Zululand. The Government, however, are not prepared to assent to any organized scheme of return on the part of the Natives, without its being submitted to Sir Arthur Havelock, and without first seeing that there is sufficient territory, so that the Natives at present in the country may not be cramped. As to the annexation of Natal, I can assure the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) that he is labouring under a misapprehension as to the real state of the case. The desire of the Zulus on that point has been ascertained, and it is found that they do not wish to be brought under Natal laws. It is not, therefore, intended that they should be annexed to Natal. I do not know whether the hon. Member has looked at the Regulations which have been published by Sir Arthur Havelock, as Governor of Zululand, under the powers vested in him by his Commission. But I am satisfied that if the hon. Member examines them he will see that the Natives have been carefully protected. In the first place, by Regulation 32, Native Chiefs in Zululand will have original jurisdiction according to the Native Law in all civil and criminal cases between Natives and their own tribes. I fully recognize the importance of the Land Question; but it will be found by reference to the Regulations that the right of allotting land is vested in the Governor, and that he has power to appoint a Commission for the purpose of marking off boundaries, and so forth. This will satisfy the hon. Member, as showing that the Government have very carefully protected the Natives, and especially on the burning question of the land. A Commission can, and probably will, be appointed to examine into these very questions. As to Proviso B, I have stated more than once, and the despatches in the Blue Books show, that Her Majesty's Government have given that question their very anxious and careful consideration. It is impossible to turn out the Boers from that part of Proviso B, because they have thoroughly established themselves there and have good titles, which the Government have undertaken to uphold. With regard to the Zulus in that district, Her Majesty's Government have to make the best bargain they can, and, as far as possible, see that any rights the Zulus have are protected. Although there was at first a great feeling against Proviso B among the Zulu Chiefs, the last Report I had was that that feeling is subsiding, and we may now trust that no difficulties will arise in regard to Proviso B. I agree that if we propose any such plan as buying out the Boers, we should find the prices of the farms rise to a very large price indeed. Her Majesty's Government have done their best to secure, as far as possible, that the graves of the Chiefs should be respected. Those graves are not the graves of the great Chiefs of the present Zulu people, as was at first supposed. Sir Arthur Havelock dealt with the whole subject in his Despatch of May 6, 1887, in which he said that the graves were those of Chiefs who held a comparatively subordinate position with regard to Chiefs of larger tribes; but he thought it desirable, and so do Her Majesty's Government, that measures should be taken to secure due respect to these burial places.

COMMANDER BETHELL: The right hon. Gentleman has not referred to the unoccupied land.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I presume the hon. and gallant Gentleman means land that has been unoccupied?

COMMANDER BETHELL: I refer to the farms in Proviso B. The new Republic has intimated by some law that the rights of the men who have not taken up the farms will lapse. I should like to know to whom the land will go?

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I have not had that question finally brought before me for decision, but I have little or no hesitation in saying that the land would go back to the Zulus.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I should like to re-assure my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Holderness Division (Commander Bethell). I happened to be travelling in Natal and Zululand at the time this Treaty was being negotiated, and I can testify to the careful and anxious consideration given to all the points, especially to those which affected the interests of the Natives by the Government. It is certainly satisfactory to note that when all the lands have been allotted to the Boers, as well as all the lands in Proviso B, they are very much less in total than the quantity of lands claimed by the Boers. Sir Arthur Havelock has been very helpless in this matter, because the lands claimed by the Boers were given to them by the Chiefs in Zululand themselves. It would come to this, that we should have to exert physical force to compel the rescission of a contract entered into between parties who were *sui juris*. Under all the circumstances, therefore, although the partition of Zululand is not that which Englishmen would like to see come about, still I think it is one that, on the whole, may be considered to have resulted well for this country.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I am glad to hear the statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I think, however, he will agree with me that, looking at the Despatches, I was justified in falling into the view I took of the arrangements made for the management of the affairs of Zululand. As I understand Zululand is to be kept independent, I beg leave to withdraw my Amendment.

DR. CLARK: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will seriously consider the question of sending Usibepu back to Zululand. If he is sent back it will mean civil war. I trust the Government will be content with giving him a pension. The great bulk of the people were not satisfied with the annexation; the King's brothers and sons, and many Chiefs were all opposed to it.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: They have all assented to it now.

DR. CLARK: They have all gone into the new Republic.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: No; they have all come out of it.

DR. CLARK: I think it would be better to give Usibepu a pension or land in the Reserve, but do not let him go back to his own country, or it will simply mean more trouble. Now, with regard to Natal let me say this, it has the best history of all British Colonies in respect to the treatment of Natives. My only complaint is that the Natives have been treated too gingerly, because there are such Native customs yet permitted as the buying and selling of wives.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Under Sub-head D, I beg to move to reduce the Vote by the sum of £500, being part of the personal allowance to the High Commissioner. I may say at once that there is no man of whom I have a higher opinion than I have of Sir Hercules Robinson. I have not the smallest wish to reduce his pay, and I have only made this Motion with the object of obtaining information from the Government with regard to the passing of a law by which it is alleged the vast portion of the Natives of the Cape Colony are disenfranchised.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: Perhaps I may be allowed to interrupt the hon.

Gentleman. The Act to which he is now referring is a Cape Act and has nothing to do with Bechuanaland. The only Vote we are now considering is the salary of Sir Hercules Robinson. As Governor of Bechuanaland he gets no salary; but gets an allowance for expenses, which is what the hon. Gentleman probably wishes to reduce.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: The right hon. Gentleman has me there.

Dr. CLARK: I see there is an item of £500 for cable messages sent by the High Commissioner. I think it would be better if some discretion were used in regard to these cable messages.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: I think it is rather hard that any observations should be made upon this item, especially when we have reduced the cost of cable telegrams to £1,500.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: The Amendment I have next to move is a more serious one than the last; it is to reduce the Vote by £50,000, part of the grant for Bechuanaland, and I bring it before Her Majesty's Government in the hope that I may obtain from them some information with regard to their policy in that country. When we went to Bechuanaland we had no settled policy; we drifted into our position there, and I am anxious to discover whether we have a settled policy now that we are there. Now, although there may be a reduction in the Vote this year, still the Vote is very large, and the position is such as to involve very grave risk in the future. We do not know whether in the future it may not amount to millions, and therefore I think it desirable that we should have some information from the Government as to their policy. Bechuanaland is not only a very large territory in itself, but its margin is almost illimitable; and, as was the other day stated at the meeting of the British Association, "Men informed on the subject are utterly without intelligence as to the boundaries of Bechuanaland." The attitude taken up by this country must, if persisted in, inevitably lead to the establishment of a great British Empire in the interior of Africa; and I want to know what are the objects with which we hold this territory—whether Her Majesty's Government propose further extension or otherwise? We went to Bechuanaland, I believe, to do justice to Montsioa and Mankoroane in the first place; and, secondly, with the desire to establish a trade route through the country with the Cape. Certainly the assistance we gave the Chiefs has been of a very strange and unsatisfactory kind, for, on turning to the Blue Books, I find that their pages are covered with the complaints of Mankoroane and Montsioa, who are very dissatisfied with the way in which they have been treated. In fact, instead of establishing these Chiefs, whom we went there to protect, we have reduced them to the position of British subjects; we have taken most of their land, and reduced them to the condition of occupants, of reserves as in other Colonies. I am not at all surprised at their complaining of the treatment they have received. It is rather hard that these men should have been dealt with thus; they were depicted as virtuous Native Chiefs, and yet we have reduced them to the position I have described. Hence these pitiful complaints, and hence it is that Montsioa has alleged, with or without truth, that the Europeans have been "worse than a bad neighbour to him." Again, the trade route with the Cape Colony is not in a real sense an Imperial interest, and I am very much inclined to protest against the heavy cost laid on the British taxpayer in order to maintain our influence in this part of the world. It seems to me, that if we interfere we must make up our minds for the establishment of our dominion in Central Africa, and take upon ourselves the responsibility of administering that part of the country. I hope, therefore, we shall learn something from Her Majesty's Government as to their real intentions with regard to Bechuanaland, and, with that object, I beg to move the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £50,000.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out to the hon. Gentleman that the balance of the Vote is only £48,000.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Then I will move the reduction of the Vote by £40,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item E—Grant in Aid, British Bechuanaland — be reduced by £40,000."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

Dr. CLARK: I am afraid I must take up a few minutes in making some remarks on this important question. If the British Government and Imperial Parliament will take upon themselves the government of large numbers of people, we must be prepared to give some little time, at any rate, to the consideration of their needs. Some very important decisions have been come to with regard to this territory, and there is no doubt some basis for the complaints made by some of the Chiefs. The Land Commission has given its Report, and it refers to three classes of interests which are involved—first, the interests of the Stellalanders; secondly, British interests; and, thirdly, the interests of the Natives. Now, as far as the Stellalanders are concerned, they have very little to complain of; they have practically got the best part of Bechuanaland. They had it with a restriction with regard to water rights, and they are leaving the country in consequence, but, as I have said, they have little or nothing to complain of; with regard to British interests they have been very scurvily treated; but, passing from that subject, I will come to the third, and most important, part of the question. I can assure the right hon. Baronet that I am no friend of Montsioa, whom I believe I characterized last year as a "bloodthirsty rascal;" but I wish to point out with regard to Mankoroane's people, that they have not got enough land to live upon comfortably if they are going to live as they have in the past. Of course, I know that, to a large extent, the Commission could not help itself in this matter; but the fact remains that Mankoroane's garden ground has been given to the Stellalanders; they are there, and you cannot get them out of it. Although a portion of the land has been given away, there is still a portion which has not been given away available; and as I have said, as far as these people are concerned, if they are to live as they have in the past, more land will be wanted by them. The present position of Members of this House when they ask Questions of the Government is very unsatisfactory, and it may be illustrated by a circumstance in connection with Montsioa, who complained that a European town had been placed near his territory. Now, when I was at the Cape, last year, I found that this town was just 700 yards away from Montsioa's land; but the answer given in this House, when the matter came up in the form of a Question, was that it was two miles away from the place. We have taken away land for town purposes; the town is large and rapidly growing; and it will probably become a large mining centre. The poor Barolongs will probably be wiped out. These people have been agriculturists; but they have not now enough land or enough water—what land they have, owing to the want of water, is rendered practically useless. Now, one thing has taken place lately to which I strongly object, and that is the taking away of Border farms for the purpose of giving them to the Constabulary. I formed a good opinion of the Bechuanaland Police when I was at the Cape, and I do not think the Irish Police were superior to them; as a matter of fact, these were not so much a police force as a military force under Sir Charles Warren. However, to take away this land, give it to policemen, and and then allow them to hand it over to substitutes, is an act which I cannot but regard as a very great blunder, because you are simply taking away land which will be required by the Barolongs. The condition of Bechuanaland is very unsatisfactory. You are going to spend out of the £91,000 advanced £78,000, or nine-tenths of the money, for the maintenance of the Border police, who, I think, at the present time, are not wanted, however much they might have been when Bechuanaland was taken away from the Transvaal—when the men who had farms lost them and became outcasts, and were told to get compensation from the Transvaal Government. But the men who were then troublesome have left the place years ago, and are now gold diggers 500 or 600 miles away; and there is no possibility or chance of their causing further trouble. There is, therefore, no necessity for keeping up this very expensive police force; and I suggest, as there has been nothing done for Bechuanaland in the way of schools and other matters necessary to progress, that the money now spent on the police should be applied for other purposes which would tend to the development of the country. Our Administrator, Sir Theophilus Shepstone, is doing his best, no doubt, under the circumstances; but he has combined two offices which ought to be kept quite distinct—namely, those of Deputy Governor and Judge. In the latter capacity he decided privately a case brought before him upon evidence got outside. What we want in this country is not to have a man acting at the same time both as civil magistrate and administrator; we want these offices discharged by different persons. I hope that next year we shall not be called upon to spend any more money on the police force, and that if you are to spend money on Bechuanaland at all it will be for the development of the resources of the country, unless you are going to change your policy and hand it over to the Cape Colony. I think we ought to lay down some definite lines of policy with regard to these countries, and endeavour to carry them out; and I have suggested the desirability of appointing a Commission with the object of trying to bring together the different Colonies in a Customs Union, and that some form of confederation should be given, although I am aware that some of my hon. Friends were opposed to the idea, because it was believed that the Government would send out men of the Exeter Hall type. If this is to be done, the sooner it is done the better, because I know that the Dutch and English have a common aim and object, and I think might help each other in developing civilization. At any rate, I hope that we shall see before long a more complete fusion than exists at present in these South African lands.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: I agree with the hon. Member that a final settlement of South African affairs can best be effected by the hearty co-operation of the Republics, the Cape and Natal, and Her Majesty's Government; but I think that the first step in bringing about such co-operation ought to come from the other side of the water. Any movement from this country would be viewed with jealousy. Her Majesty's Government would be most anxious to work heartily in that direction if any such offer were made to them. The observations which the hon. Gentleman has made with regard to schools and improvements in Bechuanaland shall receive my best consideration. As regards the slaves, that question has not been brought before me; but I will, of course, make inquiries on the subject. The hon. Member has expressed his belief that the police are of little or no use, and that their numbers might be very largely diminished. I differ entirely from the hon. Member as to the use of the police. I believe that they are of the greatest service in maintaining law and order. But I am glad to be able to state that a considerable diminution of the force has taken place. The police have been reduced from 500 to 300 officers and men in April last, and I hope it will be further reduced to about 200 officers and men by the 1st of October next. A sum at the rate of £18,492 will be saved by these reductions. I attach the highest importance to the police farms along the frontier, and I believe that they not only are useful in keeping peace along the frontier, but that they enable the force to be reduced, as I have before stated.

Dr. CLARK: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that nine-tenths of these farms are held by substitutes, who are generally Boers?

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: The men or their substitutes are obliged to come out.

Dr. CLARK: They are serving now and getting pay as policemen.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND: I am not aware that such is the case. It is in this way that the savings to which I have referred have been effected. I believe that at the present time there is no feeling on the part of Montsioa against these farmers on the frontier. Possibly a certain amount of hardship has been inflicted by the invasion of Europeans; but I should like to call the attention of the hon. Member to the fact that if it had not been for our intervention Montsioa and Mankoroane would have been wiped out by the Boers. At the time the new Republics were started by the Boers in the territories of these Chiefs no attempt was made by previous Governments to stop their proceedings. During a previous debate on the subject a strong protest was made in the House of Commons on behalf of the Chiefs who had been faithful allies of this country, and it was pointed out that unless steps were taken they would be entirely swept away. It was owing to that strong opposition that the Government of the day, the Government of the right hon. Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), did then somewhat reluctantly intervene to secure a certain amount of territory for these people. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy has asked what the views of the Government are with respect to the retention of the country. The Government propose to retain what they have. They do not propose to hand over Bechuanaland to anyone. The question as to whether the Government are prepared to accept the extension which Sir Charles Warren at one time advocated to the Zambesi is one of very great difficulty. As at present advised, however, Her Majesty's Government are not prepared to take any further steps to extend the Protectorate beyond its present limits. I do not think it possible to give any further pledge to the House, because the position of affairs in those countries changes so frequently, and difficulties crop up of a very complicated character. The Government feel that if they accept Sir Charles Warren's views and extend the Protectorate to the Zambesi they may find themselves in a difficulty, as to questions which may arise respecting boundaries of the Chiefs Khama and Lo Bengula. The Government therefore propose to retain what they have, and, unless forced to do so, to take no more. As to the complaints of Montsioa and Mankoroane in the Blue Books, I say concessions have been made, and I do not believe at the present time either Chief has any real cause for grumbling.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I am afraid I am not much wiser as regards the future policy of Her Majesty's Government by what we have been told. I have no doubt that Her Majesty's Government do not intend to extend this territory if they can help it. With regard to the case of Montsioa and Mankoroane, I must say it is very much worse than I supposed it to be. It is emphatically stated by the right hon. Gentleman that these allies of ours are about to be improved off the face of the earth because, as he tells us, they have been deprived of their land for mining purposes.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I did not say so. The hon. Member entirely misrepresents what I said.

DR. CLARK: In Bechuanaland we interfered when it was too late; in Zululand we did the same. Let me point out that this question of the White man going North and the Black man going South requires regulation. You have Tongaland, where the same thing may occur, and you have Swaziland and other territories to which adventurers are going. Then there is the question of the boundary between the territory of one of the most powerful Chiefs in South Africa, and the territory of the most Northern tribe of Bechuanas. The time has come when you should lay down conditions to let all White adventurers know that though you whitewashed some of their class in Bechuanaland and Zululand, you will not for the future recognize their doings. You should let them know that it is your intention to interfere in the early stages and not when interference can do no good.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Gentleman withdraw his Motion?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Yes.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(8) £1,000, to complete the sum for Cyprus, Grant in Aid.

MR. CONYBEARE: I just want to ask one question in reference to this Vote. I have been looking at the Report, and it appears from the statement therein contained that the revenue of Cyprus is £170,000 odd, and the expenditure 111,000, leaving a surplus of £61,000, odd. The subsidy we have to pay to Turkey is £92,745, which leaves a balance to be provided for elsewhere than out of the revenue we receive from the Island of £31,712. The Vote asked for in the Estimates is only £18,000, and I confess it is not clear to my mind where the difference comes from. However, that is not the most important point to which I want to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman, or, rather, to ask information upon. What I desire to know is whether these payments which we have to make to Turkey are to go on for ever, or whether they are limited to any particular term? Are they to go on increasing or decreasing—can the right hon. Gentleman hold out any hope that the Island will be of the slightest value to us financially, or can he say whether the burden imposed on this country will continue in the future as it has been in the past? I presume that the Island has been a sort of a military depôt, but

I have not seen in the Report any statement as to their being any soldiers there. I make that remark in passing. I do not go into the question of the finances of the Island. So far as I have been able to master the Report, it seems there is nothing to complain of as to the prosperity and general development of the Island, and the only point I desire to raise, with the view of getting information, is as to whether the revenues are likely to be a source of income to us, or whether the occupation of the Island will be a prolonged drain on the resources of the country?

SIR HENRY HOLLAND: I am afraid my reply and explanation must be somewhat lengthy, but I think they will be satisfactory to the hon. Member. It must not be overlooked that there are two series of transactions involved in this question of Cyprus. These are entirely distinct transactions entered into at different times and for reasons quite unconnected with each other. One is, the series of transactions arising out of the insolvency of Turkey, and our joint guarantee with France of the interest of the Turkish Loan of 1855, amounting to £3,815,000. Each country has to pay about £40,872 a-year interest. There are also other debts due from Turkey to us. The other series of transactions is the occupation of Cyprus in 1878, before Turkey stopped payment, which took place in 1879. Our implications in Turkish matters in respect of loan and debts have caused the English Government a loss, up to date, of about £336,000—namely—

	£
Seven years interest on our half of the Loan	286,000
Various bad debts due from Turkey (Synge and Suter ransoms), &c. say ..	50,000
	£336,000

We made this loss whether we took Cyprus or not, and Cyprus cannot be debited with it in any way. But what has been the result of our taking Cyprus? We have made a profit of about £109,000, and so far recouped our loss after paying for France the whole of her liability on seven years interest. This was paid because we have laid hold of the tribute money—£92,000, which was due from Cyprus to Turkey. The yearly account stands thus—

	£	£
Cyprus has paid to England		682,000
Deduct grants in aid	287,000	
Payments for France — seven years interest ..	286,000	
	573,000	573,000
		£109,000

It is urged by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), who is unfortunately not able to be here this evening, that these Grants in Aid should cease, and be made as loans which Cyprus should repay. But if the present position is understood there is no ground for this contention. Cyprus has an annual surplus of £65,000 (taking an average of last three years), which is paid to England. To this is added an annual Grant in Aid to make up the surplus of Island Revenue over expenditure to £92,000, the approximate amount of tribute. The exact amount of the grant is decided annually by the Treasury on a review of the cash balances of the Island Government and is, therefore, affected by advances, deposits, and other temporary financial transactions not belonging to revenue or expenditure. The Cyprus Government having thus made up the £92,000 out of the surplus Revenue and Grants in Aid, pays the amount over to the Paymaster General, and the Treasury gives a receipt for it on behalf of Turkey. But instead of paying it to Turkey, England lays hands upon it, and appropriates it to make good the debts of Turkey for which England and France are responsible as guarantors. As Turkey could not, or would not pay, this appropriation is pure gain to the guarantors. It thus appears that the Grants in Aid are no benefit to Cyprus, but only book transactions that the Treasury may not have to put each year an item in Estimates under heading "Interest on Turkish Loan in 1855 now in default." Cyprus now cedes the whole of its surplus to England, exactly as it would have done in former times to the Turkish Government. It cannot do more. There is no reason for making Cyprus repay grants which merely pass through the Cyprus books, as a matter of account, and which the Cyprus Government does not retain. Nor, is there in fact the slightest likelihood that Cyprus ever could repay the £287,000 thus nominally granted. I hope I have made it clear that we are not such losers by Cyprus as is generally supposed; and that Cyprus gains no benefit by these Grants in Aid. I have put out of consideration the amounts which have been paid by this country for mail services and military expenditure, as these were made for Imperial purposes and are not fairly chargeable to Cyprus.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): Is interest charged for the Grants in Aid? That is the point the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) based his objection on. He objected to these advances being treated as Grants in Aid and not as loans.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I have listened to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, and I must say it appears to me to be a very satisfactory one. It shows that the financial arrangements are better than the country would have believed. It seems, however, that France gets a better share in these transactions than we do, because, instead of having taken possession of Cyprus and being responsible for its condition financially and otherwise, she gets her £40,000 direct from the Cyprus Government. She would otherwise have got nothing from Turkey for her share of the interest on the loan, and the result of the arrangement is that she is relieved from a burden which otherwise would have fallen upon her. We, having taken Cyprus, are able to recoup ourselves, not to the extent of the whole of the £40,000, but to that sum *minus* the Grant in Aid. All I can say is, that the arrangement explained to us by the right hon. Gentleman (Sir Henry Holland), and which I do not think has ever been fully explained to us before, shows that the acquisition of Cyprus is not so disastrous a matter as it formerly appeared. The right hon. Gentleman shows us that we are not called upon annually to pay the large amount which otherwise we should have had to pay, by reason of our being able to lay hold of the money which Cyprus would otherwise have had to pay to Turkey in aid of the amount which this country guaranteed on the Turkish Loan. It appears, as I say, that the arrangement has been more satisfactory to France than to us. I presume that if we did not pay this £40,000 to France it would go directly into the Turkish revenue, and not come to us.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

(9.) £246,082, to complete the sum for Superannuations and Retired Allowances.

MR. CONYBEARE: I do not wish to enter into a long discussion of this Vote; but the hon. Member the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) will recollect that in the early part of this Session I asked him for a Return which I had previously—last year—asked the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler) for. It was a Return respecting the general superannuation list and pensions; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton gave me to understand that it was a Return which ought to be issued. I do not think, however, that it has been issued yet.

MR. JACKSON: I think it has been issued.

MR. CONYBEARE: Very well, then. I do not wish to delay the Committee in the matter.

Vote *agreed to.*

(10.) £11,800, to complete the sum for Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.

(11.) £470,000, to complete the sum for Pauper Lunatics, England.

(12.) £49,500, to complete the sum for Pauper Lunatics, Scotland.

(13.) £1,259, to complete the sum for Savings Banks and Friendly Societies' Deficiency.

(14.) £982, to complete the sum for Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain.

MR. CONYBEARE: There is here an item of £1,000 under the head of "Printing of Almanacs under the Great Seal." I should like to know whether this is a permanent charge or whether it is one of those diminishing charges which will disappear in the course of time? If it is the latter, I will say no more about it.

MR. JACKSON: I believe it is a permanent charge. A certain pension was granted to particular individuals in view of the taking over of the printing of almanacs.

COLONEL NOLAN: Does the Secretary to the Treasury think that the people in respect of whom these pensions were granted are alive? I wish to draw attention to one item in this Vote. I find that we have here an item respecting persons who gave assistance to the British Army in 1808 and 1814, the amount being £270. It appears, therefore, that the latest of these services were rendered 73 years ago, and, in order to qualify themselves for the money, the people must at the time they rendered the assistance have been 14 years of age. That would make the recipients of the grant 87 years old at least. I think it is a very likely circumstance indeed that people, under this state of facts, are going on drawing their annuities long after they are dead. At any rate, I think there is fair ground for asking the Secretary to the Treasury to give some attention to the matter with the view of ascertaining whether the recipients of the pension are alive.

MR. JACKSON: I quite agree with the hon. and gallant Member that this is a case which the Treasury might very properly look into. Before coming down to the House I did make some inquiries into the matter. I am assured that the items are carefully examined and looked into, and that the persons entitled to this money are themselves receiving it. As the hon. and gallant Gentleman will understand, the number of persons who receive the payments is a diminishing quantity. I believe that the attention which has been from time to time drawn to this matter has been of great service. It has shown the evils which have arisen under the present system; and I now hope that we shall hear no more of pensions being paid to persons long since dead.

An hon. MEMBER: How old are the persons receiving these pensions?

MR. JACKSON: I do not know when they were born.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(15.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £19,055, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Incidental Expenses of Temporary Commissions and Committees, including Special Inquiries."

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): Mr. Courtney, upon this Vote I feel bound to refer to the action of the Endowed School Commissioners in reference to Hutcheson's Charity in Glasgow. I have no fault to find with the Commissioners personally, but only with the policy they have adopted. The other day I presented to this House a Petition signed by the Preceptor of the Royal Incorporation of Hutcheson's Hospital finding fault with the manner in which the scheme for that endowment has been framed and carried out. I need not go into the particulars of that Petition, as a copy of it was sent to every Scotch Member, and the Petition itself is before the House; but I will refer briefly to its terms. In 1641 the Hutchesons bequeathed a considerable sum of money, first of all, for the support of 12 indigent men who by misfortune had been reduced in circumstances; and, secondly, for the education and maintenance of 12 boys, sons of burgesses, who had either lost their parents, or whose parents were unable to maintain them. The bequest has so increased in value that the annual income now derived by the Charity is upwards of £13,000. While the income of the Charity has thus largely increased from 1641, the population of the City of Glasgow has increased in equal ratio, and the result is the endowment is no greater in proportion to the population then it was in 1641. From time immemorial this Fund was divided into two parts; two-thirds were devoted to pensioners, and one-third to the purposes of education. In 1872 an Act of Parliament was passed regulating this endowment, and in that Act of Parliament it was prescribed that a sum not exceeding two-thirds should go to pensioners, and a sum not exceeding one-third should go to education. The Endowment Commissioners came into existence, and these Commissioners were anxious to secure as much as possible of this endowment for the purpose of education. Under a scheme which they framed three-fifths of the money goes for pensions, and two-fifths for educational purposes. The effect of this change on the part of the Commissioners is that £900 which should go annually to pensioners is devoted to the purposes of education. Now, the pensions were to be given to a particular class of the community—a most deserving class of the community—namely—

> "To citizens of Glasgow, or persons who, in the estimation of the Patrons, might be considered needful and deserving of aid, and who should have carried on business or trade in Glasgow for some time, and, to some extent, on their own account, with credit and reputation, or who should have been in any way the means of promoting the prosperity of the city, who by misfortune have been reduced in circumstances, and to the widows and daughters of persons of the above description, whose circumstances the Patrons might consider called for such assistance."

The Committee will observe that this class of pensions are a class very much neglected in this country. These people have seen better days; have been reduced in circumstances, and any money left for their benefit ought to be very jealously guarded. Then, again, the money applied to the purposes of education has been applied in a manner which certainly does not occur to many to be right. The Commissioners seem to have concluded that the bequest was principally intended for the middle classes, and they have acted accordingly. The result of their action is that there are on the South side of Glasgow, under this endowment, two first class schools, one for boys and another for girls. As regards the management of the schools I have nothing but the highest praise; but what I want to point out to the Committee is, that, as a matter of fact, these schools are practically a saving to the ratepayers of Glasgow. There are similar schools on the North side of Glasgow. In all these schools elementary and secondary education is given. The only difference between the schools is, that the schools on the North side of the City are provided at the expense of the local rates, and those on the South side are provided at the expense of funds that were bequeathed for the education and maintenance of boys who have either lost their parents, or whose parents are unable to maintain them. The objection that is taken to the present scheme is that a most deserving class of persons are deprived of £900 a-year. The interests of the pensioners conflict with the educational interests. The just demands of the pensioners cannot now be complied with, though on the 31st of December last the Commissioners had a balance of upwards of £1,000. Now, I want to impress upon the Committee the fact that these schools on the South side of Glasgow are an absolute necessity. They are required in the locality. This is self-evident because the Commissioners would not be warranted in establishing the schools in the locality if they were not required. If these schools are required in the locality their existence simply means a saving to the ratepayers. If these schools were not there the City of Glasgow would have to provide others of exactly the same description. These funds are being appropriated for the purpose of saving the ratepayers of the City of Glasgow who would otherwise be obliged to provide schools. The Imperial taxpayer is also saved something. Now, according to the Education Act of 1872 the Scotch Education Department are entitled to give grants of money to any school required in a locality. If the Department have come to the conclusion that these schools are required for the locality, there is no reason why they ought not to be maintained out of public money. What would be the amount of public money required? I suppose there are only about 2,000 scholars, so that between £1,500 and £2,000 a-year would be required. The sum in dispute between the pensioners on the one hand and the educational interests on the other, is £900 a year. There can be no reason whatever why funds granted for purely benevolent purposes should be entirely used for the purpose of serving local and Imperial taxpayers, and I do not, of course, expect that at this period of the Session and upon this Vote, the Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) can go into the merits of this matter, but I have brought it before his notice in the hope that during the Recess it will receive the serious attention of the Scotch Education Department. That funds bequeathed for the benefit of deserving poor and sons of burgesses, should be applied to the purposes of secondary education for the middle and upper classes, and for saving the pockets of the local and Imperial taxpayers, is a matter deserving of serious attention. There is great pressure on the Hutchesons Trust from those poor people who have seen better days and are in reduced circumstances. It would be a very great advantage if £900 more were available for them, and what they ask is that this sum should be again devoted to their relief.

MR. J. A. CAMPBELL (Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities): I should like to be permitted to offer a few observations in reply to the speech of my hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell). I have the honour to be one of the Commissioners whose work he has been assailing. In answering him, I wish to acknowledge most thoroughly that the Hutcheson Charity has done a very great amount of good, and I have no fault whatever to find with what is called the pension part of that institution. It is an evidence also that this great endowment has been in careful hands, that as the hon. Gentlemen (Mr. Caldwell) has shown, the endowment has grown from a sum of about £4,000 in the middle of the 17th century to a sum yielding £13,500 per annum at this moment. The Educational Endowments Commissioners have had to deal with this as with other endowments affecting education. The allegations or charges that are made against the Commissioners in this case, as stated in the Petition from the patrons of Hutchesons' Hospital, or the trustees or managers of the charity part of this endowment, are three in number. The first is, that the Commissioners have made an unfair apportionment of the endowment between charity and education; secondly, that the share they have given to education has been proved to be excessive; and, thirdly, that the education they have given is a misapplication of the endowment. These, I think, are the three charges brought against the Commissioners. Now, Mr. Courtney, I have to explain that the duties of the Educational Endowments Commissioners were set forth in the Act of Parliament which appointed the Commission. The Commissioners were appointed with three objects. One was to extend the usefulness of the educational endowments; the second was to carry out more fully the spirit of the founders' intentions in these endowments; and the third was to make these endowments, as far as possible, available for higher education of a suitable kind. Now, there was a special provision in the Act regarding what are called mixed endowments—that is, endowments which are not wholly educational. With regard to these the Commissioners were empowered to fix the proportion to be applied to education subject to certain directions in the Act, and also subject to a certain check. The directions which were given them were that they were to consider what had been the practice in the conduct of the endowment, but not necessarily to be guided by that practice. They had to look beyond the practice to what was stated in the original foundation. Now, my hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell) has referred to an Act of Parliament of 1872, regulating the Hutcheson Trust. That was a private Act, under which the Governors applied at least one third of their income to education, and the remainder to charity. But the Educational Endowments Commissioners had to go beyond this private Act; they had to consider the proportion which ought to have been appropriated and applied to education according to the express directions of the original foundation. Now, when we look back to the original foundation, what do we find? We find that the Hutchesons originally gave for charity £2,295, and for education £1,722, making in all just over £4,000; 43 per cent, therefore, of the total was, by the original bequest, appropriated to education. Now, the Act of Parliament, which was founded upon what had been the practice of the trust for some time, applied at least one third to education, which was $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent, instead of 43 per cent, which was the original proportion. But, in giving evidence before the Commissioners as to the proportion which had been devoted to education, the Chairman of the Trustees—who is called the Preceptor—stated, and he spoke for the managers of the charity, that the endowment gave rather more than $\frac{7}{12}$ for charity, and rather less than $\frac{5}{12}$ for education. Now, taking his statement we find that the original endowment gave $41\frac{2}{3}$ per cent for education. The Commissioners, looking into the whole case, came to the conclusion that the proper proportion to give was two-fifths for education—that is, 40 per cent, a little less than the trustees of the charity had acknowledged was the proportion originally. The trustees themselves, through their chairman, stated that two-thirds for education was a shade too little. It is said in the Petition that, although they have given only one-third for education, they have spent a capital sum of from £35,000 to £38,000 on school buildings. But it appears that that sum would not do more than make up—it would not as much as make up—for the shortcomings in the apportionment to education during the many years before their Act of Parliament was obtained. The Commissioners then, after hearing the evidence of the trustees, arrived at the conclusion that a fair apportionment would be two-fifths to education and three-fifths to charity. Now, it is stated in the Petition that the Commissioners exceeded their powers; but I have said that the Act of Parliament under which the Commissioners proceed gives them not only directions what to do in the case of a mixed endowment, but prescribes a check upon them if they go wrong. The check is that those who feel aggrieved may go to the Court of Session with their complaint. If the Commissioners have done wrong in this case, why did not the managers of the charity apply to the Court of Session? It is an open secret that they took counsel's opinion. They applied for the opinion of counsel as to whether they had a case to go with to the Court of Session. What answer they got I do not know; but the fact is that they did not go to the Court of Session, and this scheme came into operation two years ago. The time for making a complaint was when the scheme was published. The second complaint made against the Commissioners is that the proportion they have given is shown to be excessive because there is a considerable balance on hand. Why, Mr. Courtney, is there a balance on hand? I may say it is a matter with which the Commissioners have nothing to do. If there is any complaint it should be brought against the governing body who are now in charge of the educational part of the endowment. It is no part of my duty to explain or defend the existence of that balance, but the defence is not difficult. The balance arises from the fact that, although the scheme has been in operation for two years, it is not yet in full operation in the sense of having all its bursaries allocated. This is a scheme which, besides maintaining two schools, has an elaborate system of bursaries and scholarships. There are 200 foundationships, and there are 218 bursaries and scholarships. These are tenable for two or three years, and the governing body have done wisely in not awarding all of them the first year. Because the whole of the bursaries and scholarships have not been given there is a balance in hand. It is of importance for the governing body to have a balance in hand at the beginning of a work of this kind. They have no capital fund or reserve fund to fall back upon in case of any extra expenditure, and the saving they have been enabled to make in the first two years of their existence from the bursaries and scholarships not being all taken up provides them with a moderate reserve fund, which will be of essential use to them in carrying on these two large schools. Now, it remains for me to notice the third complaint, which is that the quality of education given in these two schools is not suitable; that, in the words of the Petition, a great part of the money is expended on education of a higher class than the founders intended. My hon. Friend (Mr. Caldwell) has spoken of the founders having given their money for the benefit of the poor, but there are poor and poor. There are different classes of poor, and the poor the founders had in view were the sons of burgesses. Now, the burgesses of the 17th century were not paupers. A burgess was understood to be a man in a position to be in business for himself, and it was for the benefit of the sons of poor burgesses, or decayed burgesses, that this money was left. What is the kind of education that is given? One would imagine, from the expressions in the Petition, that it is a very expensive education, but the fees in the Grammar Schools under this Trust range from 22*s.* 6*d.* to 40*s.* a-quarter. Such are the fees which are drawn from the day scholars who attend these schools. The complaint that is made would lead one to suppose that those who make the complaint had themselves, when they had charge of the money, aimed at something entirely different. Now, the original prospectus of the governors—those who make this complaint—contains a sentence to the effect that—

"This Educational Institution is intended to reproduce in its best form the old Grammar

School, where, in former days, a superior education was to be had at a moderate fee; where the children of country gentlemen, professional men, tradesmen, and artizans were educated side by side, and prepared either for the University or commercial life."

That was the aim which the Directors of this Charity had when they started this school 12 years ago; and now, when the school is carried on by a new governing body, with the same object in view, the old trustees complain that an education is being given of an entirely different kind from what was intended by the founders. I hope the Committee will have no hesitation in declining to be moved by the representations of my hon. Friend.

Mr. CALDWELL: In answer to what has been stated by the hon. Member for the Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities (Mr. J. A. Campbell), I must point out that he has not taken into sufficient consideration the important fact that there was expended on the new buildings the sum of £35,000. That money, at 4 per cent interest, would have yielded about £1,400 a-year. It is all very well to go back to the year 1641 to try and discover what was the proportion for education, and now ask the pensioners of the present day to recoup all that has been expended between then and now. Why should the present pensioners be called upon to refund sums of money that have been expended upon pensions for the last 200 years? Was there ever such a thing done in this country before? To say that the pensioners of the present day should be punished because the pensioners of a former period received too much money is absurd. These buildings are modern buildings—the girls' school is an entirely modern building—and they cost £35,000. The Commissioners say they must take into consideration the fact that £35,000 has been spent on the buildings. Supposing the Commissioners had taken that into consideration, two-thirds and one-third would have been nearer the mark. Then, with regard to education at a grammar school. I pointed out that Mr. Hutcheson had given the money that the boys might be educated at the Grammar School at Glasgow—not in order to provide a school. Now, I say that the school board schools at Glasgow would be quite sufficient for the persons referred to in the instrument governing this foundation. These children do not require special school accommodation for them; and the directions of the school deed would be sufficiently provided for and carried out if they were educated in the school board schools of Glasgow.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): In this Vote we find the details of the expenses of a number of Commissions, indicated by various letters of the alphabet, down to the letter J. Then, under the letter K, we have a Vote of £7,000 "for Commissions not specifically provided for." Now, I object to vote this sum for Commissions that we know nothing of, and as to the objects of which we have no information. I do not think that £7,000 should be voted without some more definite statement of the purpose to which it is to be applied. Then there are two or three Commissions, the expenditure on which is provided for by this Vote, on which I should like to say a few words. There is a sum taken for the Dublin Hospitals Commission. Now, that Commission lapsed in 1886-7; and, therefore, I fail to see why any expenditure on account of it should appear in this Vote. I observe that the Commissioners on the Educational Endowments (Ireland) Commission are paid salaries of £700 a-year each, while the three Commissioners on the Irish Public Works Commission receive 10 guineas per day. I do not know why there should be this disparity in the remuneration of the members of the two Commissions. I know that the members of the Educational Endowments Commission are persons of the greatest eminence in Ireland; and I cannot understand why they should be paid only £700 a-year each, while so much higher a remuneration is given to the members of the other Commission; unless, indeed, the explanation be that the members of the latter Commission are Englishmen and the members of the former are only Irishmen. Then I find that the Secretary of the Educational Endowments Commission is paid £500 a-year, while the Secretary of the Public Works Commission is only paid £300 a-year. Why should the low paid Commission have a highly paid Secretary, while the highly paid Commissioners have a Secretary with a salary of only £300 a-year? Then there is an expense of £700 for shorthand writing in connection with one Commission and for £800 in connection with the other. How and where are the shorthand writers procured? Do the Government nominate them, or are they taken out of the newspaper offices; and, if so, out of what office? I hope we shall not find that shorthand writing in Ireland is made a matter of Party or political favour or patronage. I should certainly be glad to find that shorthand writers are taken fairly from different newspapers of different politics, and were not taken from newspapers of only one colour. Then there is another point. I see that only £400 a-year is taken for the travelling expenses of the Educational Endowments Commission while the travelling expenses of the Irish Public Works Commission, who were only appointed last autumn, are put down at £2,000. Why should travelling expenses cost five times as much for one Commission as for the other? The Educational Endowments Commission will expire by Statute on the 1st December, 1888. Is there any prospect that they will complete their work by that time? How many schemes have been drawn up and how many have taken effect? The Public Works Commission have three heads of inquiry—first, Deep Sea Fishing and the harbours and communications needed for; secondly, Arterial Drainage, especially in the districts of the Shannon, the Barrow, and the Bann; and, thirdly, Railways, the management of existing lines and the provision of extensions. Well, they have reported on arterial drainage, but they have yet to report on deep sea fishing and on harbours; and they have also to report on railways. Now the existing railway rates in Ireland are a crying grievance, and one of the greatest sources of embarrassment to the industry of that country, while the neglect of deep sea fishing accounts for a great deal of the misery and the social disorganization which exists round our coasts. When may we expect the Reports of the Public Works Commission on Deep Sea Fishing and Harbours and also on Railways? I see that the Treasury estimated that the Commission might conclude its labours by the 30th of this month, and that in that case its cost might be about £12,000. If the Commission is to conclude its labours on the 30th of this month, how is it that we have not yet heard anything of its Reports on Deep Sea Fishing and on Railways? As to the statement that the cost of the Commission may be put at £12,000 if its labours are completed by the 30th of September, how is that reconcilable with the fact that in these Estimates £6,000 are taken for the cost of the Commission up to March 31st next? The statement and the estimate taken together do not seem to me to be clear or intelligible. and I would invite the Secretary to the Treasury to address himself to the points I have raised.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): First, as to the £7,000 to which the hon. Member for West Belfast called attention as the amount set down for Commissions that might be appointed during the financial year, and for the expenditure in connection with them. The Committee will understand that this Estimate was framed at some time about December or January last. It was then quite impossible for us to say exactly what Commissions might be appointed during the year, or what the Commissioners might spend in the course of the year. And although the expression "Commissions not specifically provided for" may be a rather clumsy one, it sufficiently indicates the nature of the Vote, which may be said to be that of a sum to provide for the contingencies which may arise during the year in connection with the Commissions appointed during that period. It is an approximate sum based on experience and on the information we had at the time it was framed. Of course, if the money or any part of it is not required it will not be expended. Then, as to the sum set down for the Dublin Hospital Commission. There is nothing in that Vote for this year. There was an item last year, and it is customary in that case to put down the expenditure in the Votes of this year as a means of comparison and as a guidance to the Committee in regard to the relative amount of the Votes taken, and under the head to which it belongs this year and last year. The hon. Member will see that there is no amount stated in the column for this year.

MR. SEXTON: I beg the hon. Member's pardon. Will he look at the last line on page 496.

Mr. JACKSON: It is a misprint. In regard to the comparison which the hon. Member drew between the expense of the Irish Educational Commission and the Irish Public Works Commission, I would point out that, in reference to the Irish Public Works Commission — for the whole argument turns on that—the comparatively high remuneration which is paid to the members of that Commission is, in a great measure, accounted for by the fact that at the time that Commission was appointed it was not known how long the work would occupy. It was thought to be extremely desirable that a work of this importance, and one upon which so much might depend, should be entrusted to men of the highest professional ability which money could command. I think I can remember the names of the Commissioners, or some of them. Sir James Allport was the Chairman. Mr. Abernethy, the engineer, was one member; Mr. Barry, the engineer, was another. Mr. Pym was also a member, but he was an unpaid Commissioner. The other men are paid Commissioners, for they were asked to take up this work, which would seriously interfere with their professional duties; and I do not think that anyone, taking into account the eminent position these men occupy in their professions, would think them overpaid at 10 guineas per day. As to the secretary, the explanation of the lower rate for the payment to the Secretary of the Public Works Commission, as compared with the secretary to the Educational Endowments Commission, is this—Mr. Spring Rice, one of the clerks in the Treasury, is Secretary to the Irish Public Works Commission. When he was asked to take the position of secretary to that Commission by the right hon. Baronet the Member for Bristol (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), then Irish Secretary, Mr. Spring Rice was acting as my secretary, and I cannot speak with too much praise of the ability and assiduity with which he does his work. It was entirely due to his position at the Treasury that the right hon. Member for Bristol asked him to take the secretaryship of the Irish Public Works Commission. As to the travelling expenses of the Irish Public Works Commission, the hon. Member for West Belfast will recognize the fact that a Commission charged with such duties must almost of necessity be travelling about almost all the time they are engaged in their work; and, therefore, the travelling expenses of the Commission, and of the witnesses they had occasion to call, must be considerable. With reference to the other question to which the hon. Gentleman has properly called attention—the difference in the Estimates of the cost of the Irish Public Works Commission—he gave an extract from a letter written by the Secretary of the Commission, in which £12,000 was put down as an outside figure for the expense which this Commission would involve. When this estimate was made it was impossible to forecast the length of time the work would occupy. The figure in the Estimates which the Committee is now asked to vote was given by the Secretary of the Commission, after some experience of the work, and when some more approximate idea had been gained of the time the work would occupy. But even that figure must be taken only as an approximate one. When the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill) appointed that Commission in the first instance, it was expected at the Treasury that four, or at the outside, six months would be ample time in which to conclude its labours.

Mr. SEXTON: The point to which I addressed myself was that the letter which I read stated that if the Commission closed its work on the 30th of this month the cost would be about £12,000. But the Estimate before us gives the cost up to next March as only £6,000. How do you reconcile these two Estimates?

Mr. JACKSON: The amount of £12,000 was given as an outside figure for the total cost of the Commission assuming that the Commission concluded its labours by the 30th of this month. But when this Estimate now before the Committee was framed, it was anticipated that the work would be done in a much less time than now seems probable. Therefore, I apprehend that when next February comes, and the time arrives for making up the accounts for the current year, a Supplementary Estimate will have to be laid before the House. As to the shorthand writers, they are appointed by the Chief Commissioner, and are paid according to a scale sanctioned by the Treasury. We have no control over them. I do not think the patronage involved in their appointment has been used for private, personal, or Party objects.

MR. SEXTON: The hon. Gentleman has abstained from replying to the most important points that I have raised. As to the £7,000 for Commissions not specifically provided for, he explained that in a very curious fashion. Although, no doubt, on the 18th February, when this Estimate was drawn up, it might have been impracticable to define the work of the Commissions which might be appointed for the year, we are now on the 6th September. The Session is on the point of closing. The Government know what Commissions they have appointed, or are likely to appoint before next year. It is not usual to appoint Commissions in the Recess unless Parliament has sanctioned their appointment before the close of the Session. Commissions are either appointed during the Session or during the Recess, after information given to Parliament during the Session. The Government ought, therefore, to tell us what Commissions are to be paid for out of this £7,000. If they are extant, what are they? Full information on this point must now be in the possession of the Government, although it might not have been in February when the Estimates were drawn up. I do not think the Secretary to the Treasury apprehended the point I made about the two Estimates of £12,000 and £6,000 for the cost of the Irish Public Works Commission. What the official in Ireland says is this—that if the Public Works Commission complete its labours by the end of this month, its total cost will be £12,000. Well, there was an Estimate taken last year. The Estimate now before us, and which we are asked to vote, is an Estimate of the cost of the Commission up to March, 1888. And according to this, we find that the total sum estimated by the Treasury is £6,000. So that according to the Treasury, if the Commission lasts to the end of March, 1888, it will cost £6,000; while, according to the letter of the Secretary of the Commission itself, it was to cost £12,000 if it completed its labours on the 30th of the present month. How can that be? As to the travelling expenses of the Commission, the hon. Gentleman said that they were necessarily large, because the Commission would be travelling nearly the whole time they were engaged in their labours. How then is it that only 100 days are put down in respect of which salary or remuneration is charged?

MR. JACKSON: I said nearly the whole time when they are engaged.

MR. SEXTON: That means that they are engaged when they are travelling. It seems then that although the matters referred to there are urgent, the Commission, out of 500 days which will have elapsed between their appointment and March next, only charge salary for 100 days. That is a very leisurely way of proceeding. Indeed, to work on only 100 days out of 500 is the easiest way of working I ever heard of on the part of a Royal Commission. I do not think that the Treasury can escape all responsibility with respect to the shorthand writing for the two Commissions to which I have called attention; £1,500 is a large sum for shorthand writing, and the Treasury have a right to take cognizance of the way in which this work is done. It appears from the statement of the Secretary for the Treasury that Sir James Allport and the other Commissioners can exercise their discretion as to the appointment of shorthand writers. They may if they like give this shorthand writing to *The Dublin Express* and *The Irish Times*, and thus distribute several hundreds of pounds as remuneration for shorthand writing to these Tory papers without giving a shilling to the popular side. I must really ask the Secretary to the Treasury to communicate with the Commissioners and find out from what newspaper offices, if from any, they have taken their shorthand writing staff. Then, I have asked the hon. gentleman how far the work of the two Commissioners to which I have referred has proceeded. We had Estimates in respect of them amounting to several thousand pounds, and yet although one has been at work for two years and the other since October last, we have not heard a word about the way in which they have performed their functions. The Irish Public Works Commission were appointed to report, but have not yet reported on railway rates and deep sea fishing. We are waiting for those Reports in order to get the Government to say what legislation they intend to propose. They have hitherto staved off the inquiry by saying "Oh, we must wait for the Report of the Commission." But although the Commission have reported on arterial drainage, the Government have done nothing in respect to that matter. How soon will the Commission report on the other matters? Will they close their inquiries next month or when, and when shall we have their Reports? When we meet in February what chance is there that we shall have any legislation? Then as to the Educational Endowments Commission, I wish to know how many schemes have been framed and how many have been carried into effect? When Commissioners receive a salary of £700 per annum there is a temptation to dawdle and draw out their labours, and I am anxious to know whether the Educational endowments which fall within the scope of the Commission are likely to be dealt with in the time limited by their act.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): As to the time that the Public Works Commission are likely to report, I am afraid that they will go on as long as we pay them 10 guineas a-day. The Commission was very slow in reporting on the arterial drainage, and I am very anxious to see their Reports on deep sea fishing and on railway rates. I am afraid that they will delay their report on deep sea fishing and harbours until they have reported on the subject of railway rates; but, at any rate, we should know when they are likely to report. They went round Ireland in July, and since then they cannot have had much travelling to do. I certainly think that their Report on deep sea fishing should not be much longer delayed. If we do not have this Report printed in October the Cabinet will have an excuse for not going into the question in November. In fact, we ought to have this Report now for the Commissioners have now enormous experience of Ireland, and it is not a case for putting off. It is a question on which we should have an early Report certainly in another month.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Goschen) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I shall leave the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) to reply to the points of detail that have been raised in this discussion. But I am desirous to say as regards this Commission on Irish public works that the Government are anxious to press forward the Reports on other branches of the inquiry besides that on which the Commission have already reported. I have looked into the Report they have presented, and conversed with some of the Commissioners upon it. I have no hesitation in saying that they have brought the greatest energy and ability to the work on which they are engaged, and I have seldom been more impressed than I am with the desire of the Commissioners to make good progress and do good work. They are gentlemen of the greatest eminence, and they are not anxious to prolong the inquiry; nor are they likely, as has been suggested, to prolong it for the purpose of securing the remuneration they receive. The remuneration which Mr. Abernethy and Mr. Barry receive is not, I may say, high, considering their standing in their profession, and the ordinary scale of remuneration in that profession. Every effort shall be made to push forward these Reports. The Government have already given an earnest of their desire in this matter. I cannot say how soon the Deep Sea Fishery Report will be given; but the work of the Commission has been very laborious, and has required very considerable study. I will, however, communicate with the Commissioners and let the hon. and gallant gentleman know what the prospects of obtaining the Report are.

Mr. SEXTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government intend to follow up the Report of the Commission by any proposals respecting arterial drainage?

Mr. GOSCHEN: It would be impossible to spend more money on the arterial drainage of Ireland this year, because of the legal difficulties there are in the way of interfering with vested rights in the rivers. Any attempt to do it would only lead to litigation. During the Recess, however, a Bill will be prepared, and schemes will be brought forward for proceeding energetically with the works on the Bann, the Shannon, and other rivers.

Mr. JACKSON: I am afraid that in what I said just now I did not make my explanation quite clear. The hon. Member has called attention to the item of £7,000. I would point out that the sum, which is here stated at £6,300, is the amount which will come in course of payment during the current year—that is to say, from the 31st March last to the 31st of March next; but there was an expenditure prior to the 31st of March last, which was met out of the Vote taken in the preceding year for the Commissioners. I have not the exact figures here; but the difference between the Estimate of the £12,000 in the one case and the figures in the other case, *plus* any Supplementary Estimate which may be found necessary, will about balance. With regard to the shorthand writers, I will endeavour to ascertain exactly how they are obtained, and let him know.

MR. SEXTON: As regards the schemes?

MR. JACKSON: I understand that in view of the progress which has been made by the Educational Commission there is no reason at present to anticipate that the original estimate that the Commission would complete its labours, I think, not later than the 31st of December, 1888, will be exceeded.

COLONEL NOLAN: I can assure the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) that I did not question the ability of these Commissioners, nor did I wish to convey the idea that they are more anxious for salaries than anyone else is. But I suppose there is a certain amount of human nature even about Commissioners who are inquiring into the subject of deep sea fishing or arterial drainage. The points we have raised have not at all been answered. The first was as to the date of the Report. I suppose the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not know, and that there is, consequently, no good in trying to get it. The second point was that the Deep Sea Fishery Report should not wait until the Commissioners have gone into the railway question, and I want to get an assurance from the Government to that effect.

MR. GOSCHEN: We must allow the Commissioners a certain amount of discretion, and they must take the course they think best for arriving at a proper decision. They will be aware of the great desire there is that there should be an early Report on the subject of the deep sea fishery; but the determination of the question must be left to their discretion.

COLONEL NOLAN: Well, I must say that if they do not make the Report the whole conduct of the Government will not have been very straightforward since last year, when the Predecessor (Lord Randolph Churchill) of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) made a certain amount of capital out of the appointment of this Commission. There have been many delays in the production of the Report; and if its publication is put off until it will be of no use I must say that I think the Government have been trying to make capital out of promises which they do not fulfil. The reference to the Commission was of a very simple character, and all I want to secure is that the precedent of the Arterial Drainage Reports will be followed in regard to the deep sea fisheries. I believe we shall have to wait another year for the Railway Report.

MR. SEXTON: I would point out that the most competent witness respecting the labours of the Commission—namely, the Secretary—estimated in January last that the work of the Commission would finish on the 30th of this month. Now, I would ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) if he would ask the Commissioners, consistently, of course, with the due discharge of their functions, to do their best to report during the winter, so as to enable legislation on the subject to be proceeded with next Session?

MR. GOSCHEN: Certainly. I will make that representation to them.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

(16.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,804, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for certain Miscellaneous Expenses."

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I am sorry that my hon. Friend the senior Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) is not here this evening, because recently he had a Notice of Motion upon this Vote; but as he is not present to take up the running, it is incumbent upon us to question the expenses that arise under the Vote with reference to the cost of the robes and insignia for the Knights, Companions and Officers of the Orders of the Garter, the Bath, the Thistle, St. Michael and St. George, and so on. These expenses amount to £4,770. There is also an item of £210 for repairing the insignia of the several Orders, and other miscellaneous items. What I should, in the first place, like to call the attention of the Committee to is the extraordinary disproportion between the expenditure on what the hon. Baronet the Member for the Cockermouth Division of Cumberland (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) called "tomfoolery," or something equally disrespectful, and the next item, which relates to the Albert Medal for saving life, and which only amounts to a paltry £20. Then we come to another Distinguished Service Order, the cost of insignia for which is £500. Now, I have no objection at all to spending a good deal of money on such things as Albert Medals for saving life. That is what I may call a reward for something in the way of reproductive labour; at any rate, it is an expenditure which reflects some credit upon us as a nation. But what benefit is to be derived from the expenditure of thousands of pounds upon a lot of absurd, old-fashioned arrangements, such as an hon. Member has designated "tomfoolery," connected with the Lord Chamberlain's Department, I cannot understand. My contention is that if noble Lords and others desire to dress themselves up in robes and insignia they should pay for their own enjoyment, and not come upon the poor taxpayers of this country to pay for their equipment. I should like, Mr. Courtney, to ask the Government what repairing the insignia of the several Orders means? I am happy to say that I have no acquaintance with these Orders. I do not know whether the insignia of the Bath, for instance, is a bath, and whether the repairing of that particular insignia means the repairing of a bath in which these noble Knights and others occasionally wash themselves. It is impossible to treat these matters seriously. The whole thing is so utterly ridiculous, so utterly out of place in this 19th century, that it is really out of the question to attempt to deal with it in a serious fashion at all. And I tell you what, Mr. Courtney, the country is not disposed to treat it seriously. People outside ridicule all this. Perhaps a great many of them do not understand it. The only serious point with people outside who have to put their hands in their pockets and pay for these things is that they should have to pay at all. They look upon it as a very serious inconvenience and a great imposition, and there is a growing determination on the part of those who have to pay to put a stop to such things in the future. It is in order to emphasize this growing feeling in the country that we take advantage of every opportunity that is afforded to us of questioning these Votes. The second portion of the Vote, Item B, is part of the same business, but is, perhaps, a little more ridiculous than the first part. It is an allowance to the Marshal of the Ceremonies for attendance on Foreign Ministers. I should like to know who is the Marshal of the Ceremonies, and who are the Foreign Ministers on whom he attends? Then there is a periodical allowance for nine trumpeters. Who on earth wants trumpeters? [*Ministerial laughter.*] The laughter which proceeds from hon. Gentlemen opposite completely justifies the proceeding I am taking. It is impossible for hon. Members to look on the thing seriously at all. If they go into such roars of laughter over the nine trumpeters, what will they say to the one kettledrum? These different items mount up, in the aggregate, to a very considerable sum, and we have only yet got through some £5,880 worth of what we have to spend upon these absurdities. There is another item—namely, that of fees to heralds and others in respect of patents of creation. Now, there is a mystery about these fees. I think there was an article in one of the daily papers this morning on the subject; and, as far as I can gather—and I have been endeavouring to find some record of these matters—how the people who get these dignities and robes and insignia, and all that sort of thing, and who become Knights of the Garter and the Bath, and the rest of it, do not pay the fees themselves, but have them paid for them by the country. I should like to ask the Goverment whether this is so or not? Do they pay for the stamps, or how is it? There is, as I say, a mystery about these things, and I have not been able to penetrate it. There is another item, F, which relates to the salary of the Receiver of Hereditary Revenue, £300, and an allowance to the Receiver for office expenses, amounting in all to £445. Who is the Receiver of Hereditary Revenue? I hope he is not the same gentleman as the one we were considering the other day, when we were talking about woods and forests. If he is, that is an additional reason for questioning the Vote. I do not say, with reference to the Receiver of Hereditary Revenue, that his salary is not well earned by the work he has to do; but I cannot express any opinion on the subject, because no information is given to us about it. We are not told what the hereditary revenue is, and who gets it. The last item, G, is, to my mind, the most mysterious of all. It relates to the maintenance of some individual, I suppose; but I should not like to attempt to pronounce his name. The first part of it is spelt Lidge, which has almost a Cornish sound. For the cost, maintenance, and clothing of this person we have to pay £200. I should like to ask who this is. Is it a man or a woman? Is it a Prince, is it a Hottentot or a Chinese? Is it a thing? We ought to have some information. We cannot be reasonably asked to vote these hundreds of pounds in the dark, and without knowing what they are for. When the Government have satisfied us as to what this payment is, I should like them to tell us whether it is a permanent charge, and, if it is not, how long we are to be asked to pay it. There is a variety of topics in connection with these expenses to which we take the greatest objection; and I shall, therefore, move the reduction of the Vote. I do not want to do what the hon. Member behind me (Sir George Campbell) did just now—that is to say, move a reduction which exceeds the Vote itself; and I will, therefore, be content to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £5,500.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member has done precisely the same thing. The balance remaining is only £1,804.

MR. CONYBEARE: Well, say £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £804, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

MR. JACKSON: I think, Mr. Courtney, I had better take the items which the hon. Member has called attention to in the reverse order to that in which he took them. The hon. Member takes so much interest in this gentleman with the unpronounceable name that I think I may as well at once relieve his mind on that point. It is not a permanent charge, but is for the cost of the education and maintenance of a young Abyssinian Prince who was brought over here and has been educated here.

COLONEL NOLAN: He is dead.

MR. JACKSON: He is not dead, Sir.

COLONEL NOLAN: Who is he?

MR. JACKSON: I can assure the hon. and gallant Gentleman that he was brought back from Abyssinia; that he has been educated at Cambridge; and that he has now gone out to, I believe, Jeddah. Therefore this charge, which was undertaken by the Government—I have no doubt for very good reasons—will come to an end. With regard to the Receiver of the Revenues, to whom the hon. Gentleman called attention, he has nothing whatever to do with the official about whom a question was raised the other day. With respect to the fees on patents of creation, I may say that, as is stated in the Estimates, the fees are now taken in stamps and are paid into the Exchequer, and I believe that the amount paid in last year was about £5,600. The £1,200 which appears in the Vote is the amount paid to these heralds for certain duties they perform. The fees exceed considerably the amount which is paid to them.

MR. CONYBEARE: Are the fees paid by the gentlemen who get their patents of creation?

MR. JACKSON: They are, Sir. With regard to the Distinguished Service Order, to which the hon. Gentleman has called attention, that is a new Order which is, I believe, conferred upon soldiers who perform distinguished services in the field, and which has been very much appreciated in the Army generally. With regard to the larger item, as to cost of robes, and so on, I must point out that, as long as these Orders exist, so long will it be the duty of those who confer them to do so in the gracious and generous manner in which they are conferred at present, and to provide the robes and insignia. The robes and insignia are given, but on the death of the person are returned to those who gave them. I think I have now answered all the hon. Member's remarks.

MR. CONYBEARE: But if the old robes are turned over to the new-comers, surely we ought not to pay such large sums for them.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I cannot imagine how the Government can propose to tax the poor of this country in order to provide for the various robes and insignia for these Orders. It seems to me to be one of those things which no one can understand. This expenditure seems to imply that money is no object; and I hope and trust that the Government will put an end to what, in my opinion, is a very profligate way of spending money, because I am quite sure that if they do not the result will be to wean the people from the Government and from the Throne.

Colonel NOLAN: I do not object to this so much on principle, but I do protest against the extreme magnitude of the sum. You put down £4,770 for providing decorations for, perhaps, 200 or 300 persons. I do not think that the decorations ought to cost more than 10*s.* or 15*s.* a-piece. They would then be better than the soldiers' medals, and would certainly be quite good enough. Let the recipients spend more on them themselves if they like, but do not let the taxpayer be called upon to do so. You have not, I suppose, contracted for these robes, and I think that somebody is getting an order for supplying them, and charging the country about six times what he charges anybody else. I am sure that if you do not get all your coals at Woolwich by contract, you will not get these things by contract; and I think, therefore, you must be spending a great deal more than you need. People would be just as proud of these decorations if you paid 10*s.* for them as if they cost £10. As to the Abyssinian Prince, I should like to know who he is, because I never heard of more than one boy being brought from Abyssinia, and he is dead. I really think that when we vote £200 we are entitled to know whom it is for.

Mr. JACKSON: I really think that the hon. and gallant Gentleman is most unreasonable. The hon. and gallant Member knows perfectly well that the Vote was in the Estimates last year.

Colonel NOLAN: No; I do not.

Mr. JACKSON: Well, the hon. and gallant Member would have known it if he had looked at the Estimates. I have really given the Committee all the information I possess in regard to this individual. I have from time to time seen the account of the expenditure that goes to make up this Vote, and therefore I know that he was at Cambridge, and I am informed that he has just been sent out to a Consular appointment. I cannot give the hon. and gallant Gentleman any more information than that he was the son of an Abyssinian nobleman, that he was brought from Abyssinia under the direction of the Government, and that the Government are responsible for him.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I do not want to be unreasonable; but I should just like to ask, with reference to a very large sum in this Vote, whether it would be possible for any of us to see an account for these robes and insignia, so as to find out how many robes and insignia have been supplied for this enormous cost of £4,760? I think it is not an improper question to ask. We ought to be able to form an estimate of what these robes and insignia cost. Are they merely medals, or do the insignia really include the Garter, the Bath, the Thistle, and so on? These are matters—at least to the people who have to pay for them—of some interest. I hope the hon. Gentleman will not think me unreasonable in asking, at any rate, the number of robes and insignia that are provided out of this sum of money.

Mr. JACKSON: If the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Conybeare) really desires to know the number of robes and insignia provided for out of this Vote, I shall be very happy to give him the information. I have not the particulars here, but I will let him see them. I am sorry the hon. Member's knowledge of robes and insignia should be so limited; but I will tell him all I can.

Mr. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town): We hear a great deal of denunciation of extravagance, and of the desire of hon. Members on both sides of the House to promote economy; but when we have a practical opportunity afforded us of showing our love for economy we do not exercise it by our votes. And here is a case in which we might clearly do something in the way of economy. I do not want to see the accounts for these robes; but I do not think any Member of this House will deny that the amount of this Vote is very excessive. Therefore, if the Committee are in earnest in their desire to promote economy, they ought, when they have such a chance as this, when a Vote is brought forward which clearly is not necessary, to give their vote for the reduction of this sum. My hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan) has said that these charges for decorations are all unreasonable. At all events, there can be no doubt that the whole of the Vote might be cut down, and still you might keep on having these absurd decorations if people like them. If hon. Members are in earnest in their desire for economy they will support my hon. Friend (Mr. Conybeare) in the Division which I hope he will insist upon.

MR. JACKSON: The hon. Member who has just spoken, and who is so severe and rigid an economist, cannot ignore this fact—that if he puts the items paid into the Exchequer under this Vote side by side with the amount expended he will find that the whole cost is very nearly covered.

MR. CONYBEARE: Is that the case with the insignia?

MR. JACKSON: Yes.

MR. CONYBEARE: But there is no credit.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): These robes and insignia have been brought into requisition for a very large number of new Peers—Jubilee Peers—most of them very well off. I do not see why they could not provide for them out of their own pockets. On the other hand, if they did not care for the increased dignity, the clothes taken out of the old clothes department—for I see here an item for repairing insignia and for various repairs—might have done very well for the new Peers. I do not see why this insignia, like old wine, should not be the better for keeping, especially if they are maintained in decent repair. It is quite right and proper that those right hon. Gentlemen who got these great dignities conferred upon them should wear these gorgeous trappings when they are ennobled. [*Cries of* "Divide!"] But hon. Members on that side who cry "Divide" will agree to this—that if there is to be a great show, a great splutter, and a great dash, these noblemen should pay for it out of their own pockets. So far as regards the Albert Medals, I really think that the Vote for them ought not to be refused, because, if there is any Order that is useful and truly noble, it is that which gives rewards for saving life by sea and by land. That is a decoration we should all stand up for. But here is an item, Sub-head B, "Marshals of Ceremonies and Trumpeters in attendance on Foreign Ministers." That has a fine mediæval sound. I have to remark, in the first place, that if you want Marshals to attend on Foreign Ministers, those officials ought to be placed in a rather important position. Foreign Ministers would, I presume, require some superior person to attend on them. But what does he get? Only £80 a-year—less than right hon. Gentlemen opposite pay their footmen. Anybody who looks at this matter in a common-sense sort of way, in the light of pounds, shillings, and pence, must be clear that these men at £80 a-year are evidently not of the class or stamp or description that ought to attend on these Foreign Ministers. Get a man of higher rank, and pay a proper amount, and do not let this post be the sinecure it certainly seems to be. I say my hon. Friend (Mr. Conybeare) is quite right, not merely in bringing these matters forward, but in pressing his Motion to a Division. Then we have our friends the trumpeters and kettle-drummers turning up again. These menials of the State—these mediæval remnants—turn up on every page of the Votes; and certainly I think the time has come to do away with these useless items of expenditure. Then, again, Sir, as to these fees of patents on creation. These are fees to heralds and others. I want an explanation as to why these fees are not paid directly and not paid into the Treasury, and then paid again by the Treasury to the heralds. I think that is a very absurd thing, for if the heralds assist in conferring a peerage on these gentlemen I think they ought to be paid like other people, and directly by the noble Lords themselves. Then, as to the jewels in the Tower of London, I see by this Vote that the Keeper of the Jewels gets £300 a-year. This is another instance of a sinecure. These jewels—I have often seen them myself—are placed in the Beauchamp Tower, and we all take a pride and a pleasure in looking at them. But what do you want with a keeper? You have got all these beefeaters and soldiers, a receiver of fees, an exhibitor, a collector, wardens, &c.—surely, Sir, it does not require all these to keep the jewels? In the name of common sense I appeal to the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jackson) for an explanation. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Divide!"] I can only conclude from this, Sir, that hon. Members opposite have not common sense. I do not see why you should have such a sinecure as a Keeper of the Jewels, for the probability is that the Keeper of the Jewels never goes near them at all. Whenever anybody goes to the Tower there is a man who takes you round.

Mr. BYRON REED (Bradford E.): I rise to Order, Sir. I appeal to you whether, in your judgment, the hon. Member is not trifling with the Committee?

Dr. TANNER: The hon. Member talks about trifling with the Committee. What I want to prevent is trifling with the public purse; and I say that unless we get an explanation about this Keeper of the Jewels I shall move the reduction of the Vote by this item. I wish to put it in the clearest manner; and I say that these different individuals who receive office in connection with this Jewel House in the Tower of London ought also to be looked into. There is money received at the gate for seeing these Crown Jewels. Now I pass on to another item, and that is the maintenance of this Abyssinian gentleman. Apparently nobody knows who he is or what he is. All we have heard about him is that he comes from Abyssinia; and I think at a time like the present, when every item is examined into and receives a certain amount of attention at the hands of the general public, we ought not to pass Votes for any individuals, especially foreigners, without inspiration. This country supports too many foreigners already, and we ought not to vote any money for the support of any foreigner without knowing exactly who he is, and what are the services in respect of which the money is spent. I hope the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jackson) will condescend to give me an answer.

Mr. JACKSON: Certainly. I am always glad to give the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) any information in my power. As to the question of the officers of the Tower, he will see, if he looks at the figures, that the receipts from the visitors to the Tower are estimated this year at £2,200, which far exceeds any amount which appears on the Votes by way of expenditure for the custody of the jewels, &c. I think, therefore, that this explanation is about the most satisfactory one I could give to the hon. Member. With regard to the other matter, I have explained that this item will not occur again, because the education and maintenance of this young man is now at an end, as far as the Government is concerned. I am sure this, too, will be satisfactory to the hon. Member, and I hope the Committee will now allow the Vote to be passed.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): Perhaps the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Jackson) will answer my question now. How much of this £4,770 is paid to the officers of the Herald's College?

Mr. JACKSON: I cannot say. I have not got the details. The fees, as the hon. Member will see, are put down at £1,200, a portion of which, I have no doubt, goes to the Herald's College, but how much I cannot say. I think we must face the fact—there is no denying it—that these robes and insignia are very expensive. I have no doubt they cost, some of them, as much as £600 or £700 each. As I have repeatedly said, as long as you have these Orders, I think what we have to do is to see that the Vote is in accordance with the law and custom. Of course, the question of the retention of these Orders is another matter, and that, if raised at all, ought to be raised in some other manner than on the officers' salaries.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 23; Noes 116: Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 457.) [1.20 A.M.]

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(17.) £50, to complete the sum for the Adelaide Exhibition.

Revenue Departments.

(18.) £651,848, to complete the sum for Customs.

Mr. SEXTON: I hope the Government will not proceed with this Vote to-night. I have a most important question with reference to the constituency which I represent, which cannot be properly discussed at this hour.

The FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): I hope the hon. Member will allow us to proceed. If we cannot conclude these Votes to-night the close of the Session will be delayed, and I do not think he desires that. We will endeavour to give the hon. Gentleman an answer to all the questions he may wish to raise with reference to the constituency he represents. I do not think it advisable that we should postpone this Vote, although the hon. hour is undoubtedly late.

MR. HUNTER: If that is so, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will say that the Scotch Bills on the Order Paper will not be taken to-night, so that the Scotch Members may not have to wait in vain.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Yes, Sir. They will not be taken to-night.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.:) I should like to remark, in corroboration of what my hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) has said, that I also have an important question to bring forward on this Vote. It affects the tobacco roll industry, to which a great injustice has been done by the action of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MR. JACKSON: Considering the period of the Session, I think we might discuss both these questions. I hope now that we are so near the end of the Civil Service Votes we shall be allowed to make progress with them, and conclude them.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): If the Vote were taken to-night, could not some opportunity be given on Report for the discussion of these subjects?

MR. JACKSON: Certainly.

MR. CLANCY: I have to draw attention to the case of the roll-tobacco manufacture in Ireland—one of the few important and successful industries in Ireland now remaining—against which a blow has been recently struck by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. What opportunities shall we have if we give up our chances now? Will the Government say that the Report of this Vote will not be taken in the few minutes at the end of to-morrow's Sitting?

MR. SEXTON: The question whether we shall discuss now these two points—the question of my hon. Friend (Mr. Clancy), affecting a very important industry in Ireland, and my own question, relating to the commerce of the City which I have the honour to represent—must be determined by the nature of the subsequent opportunities which will be afforded to us. Unless we have some guarantee that the Report of this Vote will not be taken at the end of to-morrow's Sitting, or at such an hour on Thursday as will render discussion impossible, I think it is better to proceed at once.

MR. W. H. SMITH: There will be two opportunities, and if the first is not sufficient for the hon. Member's purpose he may avail himself of the second. First, there will be the opportunity afforded on the consideration of the Report of the Supply Resolution; and if he objects to that being taken to-morrow, why then it may stand over to Thursday. Further than that, there will be full opportunity upon the Appropriation Bill, on the three stages of which he may raise questions.

MR. SEXTON: The discussion on the Appropriation Bill may be taken up for other purposes. I will ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will give an undertaking that the Report of Supply shall be taken on Thursday at an hour convenient for discussion?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I will make the best arrangement in my power. The hon. Member will follow me when I say that the arrangements are that the Civil Service Votes shall be taken this evening, the Navy Votes to-morrow, and the remaining Army Votes on Thursday. When these are disposed of the Report will be taken; it is quite impossible to say whether at an early hour; but I hope the hon. Member will find the opportunity he desires.

MR. SEXTON: I shall be satisfied if the Secretary to the Treasury will consider the question of the Port of Belfast in the meanwhile.

MR. JACKSON: Certainly. I may say that I have considered it, and I have furnished the hon. Member with Returns and statistics upon which he probably founds his case, and I shall be prepared to answer that when I hear it.

MR. CONYBEARE: Is it settled that the Indian Budget will be taken on Friday or Saturday?

MR. W. H. SMITH: I have already answered the hon. Member for Northampton. If by good fortune we finish the Estimates to-morrow, then the Indian Budget will be taken on Thursday, if not on Friday.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): I suppose there is practically no chance of it being taken on Thursday?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am not sanguine, Sir.

Mr. CLANCY: I would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will undertake to be in the House when the question in reference to tobacco is raised?

Mr. GOSCHEN: Yes, Sir. I am generally in the House when any question affecting my Department is raised.

Vote *agreed to.*

(19.) £1,413,879, to complete the sum for Inland Revenue.

Mr. SEXTON: I would ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the scheme of re-organization in regard to out-door assistants has come into operation? Communications have been made to me by various persons disclosing the fact that very keen dissatisfaction is felt with the scheme. Up to a recent period promotion to the rank of "ride" officer was obtained after four or five years' service. It is now calculated that, in consequence of the increase in the lower class of assistants and the decrease in the upper, the rate of promotion will be greatly reduced. I am given to understand that two years ago an assistant from the second class would reach the position of "ride" officer after an average of four or five years' service; but now that the numbers of the upper class are reduced to 70, and the lower class to 800, the higher position is not reached for 10 years. The question I ask is, are you going to offer any compensation, by higher salary or otherwise, on this account. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that among the 800 there is grave dissatisfaction, I might almost say despair, felt at the breakdown of their prospect of promotion; and it is a serious question, well worth consideration, whether some compensation should be given to the lower class, to place them in as good a position as they expected to hold when they joined the Public Service.

Mr. JACKSON: No doubt there is always considerable disappointment felt on the part of every individual who occupies a position on the Establishment when for any reason changes are made in the Department detrimental to his prospects of promotion. But I am sure the hon. Member would not desire that the administration of the Public Service should be carried on simply for the convenience of those who occupy posts therein if, by reason of improved organization, their numbers are largely increased. It is clearly the duty of those in charge to carry out the organization. It is an essential part of the scheme that, concurrently with the reduction in numbers, there has been an increase in the work thrown upon some, giving them larger areas, and it is part of the scheme to improve the salaries of men of all grades who may remain in the Service. But I will make further inquiries and acquaint myself with the facts, and I believe I shall be able to show that the question has been very carefully considered, and that an essential part of the scheme of the Treasury is to improve the salaries.

Mr. SEXTON: Of course, I agree that the Public Service should be conducted with the greatest amount of economy compatible with efficiency; but when a man by exceptional education prepares himself and joins the Service upon a certain condition of things, and with reasonable hope of promotion within a given time, and you suddenly spring a system of re-organization that increases the number of lower places and decreases the number in the higher, he has some cause for complaint, and the Government would do well to ease the dissatisfaction that exists, if there is ground for it.

Mr. GOSCHEN: Certainly, it cannot be said that this scheme of re-organization has been sprung upon them. The re-organization of the Department has been for a long time under consideration. I entirely agree that every effort should be made to satisfy public servants side by side with economical and efficient administration. Certainly, I was under the impression that the scheme did not cause dissatisfaction, and it was suggested by hon. Members interested in the Service. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that the Government do attach great importance to the contentment of its public servants.

Vote *agreed to.*

Class I.—Public Works and Buildings.

(20.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £8,500, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, in respect to the preparation of Plans for the Erection of New Offices for the Admiralty and War Departments."

MR. DILLWYN: I have given Notice of an Amendment to reduce this Vote by £6,000; and in moving this allow me to say that I do not, in any way, wish to cast any discredit or doubt on the conduct of Messrs. Leeming. On the contrary, having sat on the Committee, it appears to me Messrs. Leeming have had hard measure dealt them, and I believe most of the Committee agreed that Messrs. Leeming behaved in a very liberal manner. But my principal object in moving the reduction is that I want to know what is going to be done with the Admiralty buildings before we proceed with the Vote. I suppose it to be £8,000 for the old plan, and £500 for the new plan. My object is to obtain from the Chief Commissioner of Works some explanation as to the course to be pursued. I was one of those who did not entirely agree with the proposals of the Government, and I am anxious to know what is proposed to be done. Looking at the Estimate, it would seem that it is proposed to close the whole thing; and I ask what position will Messrs. Leeming hold after that, and what are the Government going to do? I repeat once more that I disown any intention to prejudice Messrs. Leeming in any shape or form; on the contrary, I believe they have done very well.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,500, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Dillwyn.*)

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): I think I can satisfy the hon. Member at once and answer his question. The object of the Vote is stated on the face of it, and, as hon. Members will be aware, is to carry out as well as we can the Report of the Committee that sat this year. As regards Messrs. Leeming, I join entirely with the hon. Member in the tribute he has paid to them for their complete acquiescence in all that was proposed to them. Hon. Members will recollect that in the Report of the Committee special attention was called to the ability with which Messrs. Leeming had carried out the plans entrusted to them. The fourth paragraph runs thus—

"It is considered that Messrs. Leeming ably carried out the task assigned to them, and their plans received high commendation from distinguished architects."

That is from the Report of the majority of the Committee. But, as hon. Members know, although they carried out their work very well, the Committee decided against adopting the scheme on which they were employed. The sum we propose to award Messrs. Leeming was arrived at after careful consideration, and after communication with Messrs. Leeming on the one hand and the Treasury on the other. In the communications I had with Messrs. Leeming on the question they behaved as well as possible all through. I do not anticipate that if the Committee votes this sum that it will close our transactions with them. There was an unanimous feeling in the Committee that Messrs. Leeming should be employed on further works undertaken; and I may say, though, of course, I cannot bind myself under all circumstances to employ Messrs. Leeming, that I have put myself in communication with them, with a view to asking them to prepare plans in case the Committee should adopt this Vote. I have the greatest confidence in Messrs. Leeming. I cannot bind myself absolutely, under all circumstances, not only to enter into negotiations but to employ them; but I am anxious to have their able assistance.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): With regard to that portion of the Vote that awards a considerable sum to Messrs. Leeming I certainly have no objection to make. I do not agree with the conclusions of the Committee. I believe they made a great mistake, and though they acted on grounds of economy it will result in larger expenditure. But I would not take any step to the prejudice of Messrs. Leeming, and I feel strongly that they were placed in an unfortunate position. They were led to believe three years ago that they would be entrusted with this great work, and on the strength of that they gave up their business at Halifax, and were kept hanging about not knowing what was going to be done. Under the circumstances, they are entitled to a considerable sum. I am glad that the Government were able to come to a conclusion with them, and I do not think the sum is at all too large. But there is another part of the question upon which I wish to say a few words. A sum of £500 is asked for in the Vote for plans to carry out the recommendations of the Committee. Now, if by that the right hon. Gentleman refers to preparation of plans for the future consideration of the House, without binding the House to approval of the scheme proposed by the Committee, I shall make no objection. But if, by assenting to the proposed Vote of £500, the House is committed to that scheme, and will not have an opportunity of raising the whole question next year, then I should most strongly object. But I hardly think that is the object or intention of the Government. They will have to come to the House next year for a considerable sum to carry that proposal into effect, and I presume that they will be prepared to give an opportunity for raising the question. I hardly think they would, on such a small sum as that now before the Committee, commit Parliament to the scheme laid before the Committee. It was of a crude and imperfect nature, and it has been for such a short time before the public that there has not been time for the expression of a matured public opinion. I think it would be altogether wrong if the House at this moment, at this period of the Session, when so few Members are in town, committed itself, by voting this small amount, to a scheme involving a large expenditure. I should like, therefore, to know whether it is the intention of the right hon. Gentleman opposite to commit the House definitely to this scheme, or whether it is for the purpose of elaborating and making complete the scheme of the Committee upon which the House shall express its judgment next Session?

MR. PLUNKET: The way the matter stands is this—passing away from the item as regards the rejected plan and coming to the question of the right hon. Gentleman—the Committee which sat this year were directed to report, first, on the original plan of Messrs. Leeming; and as regards that part of their instructions they reported that the plan should be abandoned. They were also directed to report whether any part of the existing Admiralty buildings could be retained in an alternative scheme. On this they reported—

> "We are satisfied that by making additions to the present Admiralty buildings all the requirements of this Department may be met, and that the work can be done at a moderate cost."

They further go on to recommend that the staff of the Admiralty and War Department should, as soon as possible, be provided for in buildings at no great distance from each other; and they say—

> "We are of opinion that this recommendation can be carried out with a great saving of time and money by adopting other plans than those referred to. We find that the present buildings of the Admiralty may with advantage be retained."

So far the desire of the Committee is expressed, and there is an obligation upon us—and the right hon. Gentleman knows how strong that is—to obtain the sanction of the House to the recommendation. He knows perfectly well that the House of Commons next year will be free to agree or disagree with it. But that, I think, is not quite the point of his question. What he wants to call attention to is the elevation or sketch plan prepared by Messrs. Leeming. Now, I say at once that I will not bind myself or the House to the exact plan, which was prepared in haste. It is for the Government, who are responsible, to prepare plans for such a building as they think fit, and then to come to Parliament to sanction the expense. I have no intention to pledge myself or the House to that sketch plan prepared by Messrs. Leeming.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Then I perfectly well understand that there will be an opportunity next Session of raising the question on a more definite plan, and the Government will not, on this particular Vote, commit themselves to large expenditure on a scheme?

MR. PLUNKET: What I want to make clear is this—that I say nothing to derogate from the importance of the Committee, and I take it they have so far decided the question as to recommend the House to get further plans. But I do not wish to make this sketch plan finally binding on the House or the Government. The Government must propose such a plan as they think best.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I quite understand, and I am satisfied with that.

It will be open to me to go into the question next Session.

MR. DILLWYN: In asking leave to withdraw my Motion, I would just remind the Government that the Report of the Committee alluded to was not unanimous.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(21.) £4,000, to complete the sum for the Edinburgh University Buildings.

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(22.) £2,000, to complete the sum for the Victoria University.

DR. TANNER: May I ask where is this Victoria University? There are many of them.

MR. JACKSON: At Manchester.

Vote *agreed to.*

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

(23.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £6,069, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for repaying to the Civil Contingencies Fund certain Miscellaneous Advances."

MR. CONYBEARE: I have given Notice of an Amendment in reference to this Vote, and I do not think it will require many words to specify my object. First, I find an item of £2,769 4*s.* 8*d.* as equipage money for the Most Honourable the Marquess of Londonderry, on his appointment as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Now, I do not object to this because it is for the Marquess of Londonderry rather than the Earl of Aberdeen or any other noble Lord; what I object to is the expenditure of some £3,000 on occasions such as these. My contention is that when you appoint a wealthy Nobleman like the Marquess of Londonderry to a lucrative Office—I believe he gets £20,000 a-year as Lord Lieutenant—then I think he ought to pay his own equipage expenses. I object to all these subsidiary Supplementary Votes. If you appoint a public servant at this large salary, then it ought to cover all expenses. If £20,000 is not sufficient, make it £25,000 if you like. But I would remind the Committee that the President of the United States only gets £10,000; and why the Ruler, or rather mis-Ruler, of a little island like Ireland should require twice that amount passes my comprehension. But, whether that is a sufficient sum or not, our contention is that it ought to cover all these expenses of equipage. Until I know what it means, and why it should be made the subject of a Supplementary Vote over and above the salary paid, I shall continue my opposition on future occasions. But it is not enough that we should pay this sum for equipage money; I find another item of £200 for special packets for the conveyance of the Earl of Aberdeen from Kingstown to Holyhead, and the Marquess of Londonderry from Holyhead to Kingstown. I do not understand whether it is £100 each for the outgoing and the incoming Lord Lieutenant; but it seems to me an enormous sum. But I do not see why the Lord Lieutenant cannot travel in the same boat as other people; I do not see why he should be above travelling in the same packet as the Chief Secretary, for instance. We do not hear of the Chief Secretary, who is a much more important personage than the Marquess of Londonderry—we do not hear of him getting special money for passages to Ireland. If the Lord Lieutenant is too high a personage to travel in a common boat with common personages, why not get one of the Royal Yachts? We are paying £35,000 a-year for these Royal Yachts, and they practically do nothing at all; and I cannot see why they should not be employed for a useful purpose. But if you are paying £20,000 a-year to a person for undertaking the ornamental functions of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, that £20,000 a-year ought to be sufficient for covering his travelling expenses; and I object to our being called upon in Supplementary Estimates to vote these trifling sums. They may be trifling or not, but they ought to be included in the enormous sums paid as salaries. The next and last item in this Vote is one to which I take a stronger objection than the objection I have just raised; it is the item for special sums paid for the conveyance of distinguished persons. I suppose the Marquess of Londonderry is not a distinguished person, as he is not included in it. We have to pay £480 on this account. Last year it was £614, and I recollect there was then a discussion upon this Vote; in fact, there has been a discussion upon it year after year, and I trust there always will be until we knock off such an outrageous demand on the pockets of the ratepayers; but I do not recollect that any satisfactory information was given by the Government. They gave us to understand it was the ordinary and usual custom; and though there is very little to be said in defence of it, yet practically the Ministers have not got the courage to go to the Royal Family and say that this sort of imposition on the people must be put an end to at once. We have some right to demand that the highly-paid functionaries, the highly-paid officers of State, such as the Lord Lieutenant and others, should pay their own expenses out of their own pockets; and the country has a right to demand that the Members of the Royal Family, their friends, and other distinguished personages, should pay their travelling expenses out of their own pockets. There may be some use in the Lord Lieutenant; he may perform some duties other than ornamental; but there are very few duties these distinguished personages perform that are not purely ornamental, connected with circumstances relating to the aristocracy and Royalty in this country. I think it is time we spoke frankly on this subject. I do not desire to say anything disrespectful of any Member of the Royal Family; but I say that it is not in the interests of the institution we call Royalty in this country that these miserable little payments should be continued. These things rankle in the minds of the people out-of-doors—[*A laugh.*] I dare say hon. Members on the opposite side of the House think they know everything; but I rather flatter myself we, on this side of the House, know more of the feeling with which these matters are regarded by the people out-of-doors than they do. All I can say is that the worst enemy of the institution of Royalty in this country could not desire anything more than that these payments should go on and be encouraged, for the reason that it is not the amount but the meanness of the thing, asking us to pay the travelling expenses of these people, who are, for the most part, lodged and fed at the expense of the ratepayers—lodged and fed and doing nothing; it is that that rankles in the minds of the people. If hon. Members opposite value—and they do value it more than I do—the institution of Royalty, they will see to it, and by their votes ought to leave a standing record that they mean to insist that these supplementary payments on behalf of Royalty shall be put an end to. It will not be long hence before we shall have to overhaul all the questions of expense connected with the institution of Royalty. But, whether that may come sooner or later, in the meantime we have a right to insist that these payments which are not connected with our own people, but payments for their German and other foreign brothers, cousins, other relatives and their friends, we have a right to insist we should not be called on to pay these travelling expenses which they are perfectly competent to pay for themselves. I repeat again, it is the meanest thing I know of that they should come to us, considering the sums we pay for their maintenance, their board and lodging amongst us, and ask us to pay these supplementary sums; and I would make an earnest appeal to the Government to take the bull by the horns at once, and cut off this Vote altogether. Why should they jeopardize their reputation and bring themselves into unpopularity with their constituencies, and continue to bring, not only ridicule, but contempt on the Royal Family itself—["Oh, oh!"] I am speaking of what I know, and, as I said before, I am not wanting for myself to say a single word disrespectful to Royalty; but the result of insisting on these payments is that you are bringing ridicule and contempt upon that institution you deem most sacred. I will not say on this occasion what I have it on my mind to say in connection with other Votes for the Royal Family; but I say the sooner you put an end to these ridiculous payments, which the people consider it a fraud and imposition upon them to be called upon to pay, the sooner you will be doing something to render the institution of the Royal Family in our midst more lasting than it is otherwise likely to be.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £2,620, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

Colonel NOLAN: I think this sum of £200 for the conveyance of the Lord Lieutenant to Ireland might be saved, and I think the Committee ought to give their assistance in this direction. I want to know if it is a fee given when the Lord Lieutenant goes over first to Ireland, because I know that he does not charge this £200? I went over in the same boat with Lord Spencer when he went to Ireland first, and he did not have a special boat. There is no idea about his safety, and therefore no good is got out of this charge; and I would, therefore, ask why it should be done, and what is the object of it?

DR. TANNER: I would also point out that the distance between Holyhead and Dublin is only 60 miles, and the distance between Boulogne and Folkestone about 30 miles—I may be a couple of miles short; but I see here it costs £40 for carrying the Prince of Wales from Boulogne to Folkestone, while it costs £100 to carry the Marquess of Londonderry to Ireland, a sum which I strongly object to. I have crossed to Ireland on several occasions with the Lord Lieutenant upon the same boat; he had his own compartment certainly; but he got across as well as if the whole steamer was dedicated to his sacred person. I think the time has come when this sort of nonsense should be put an end to. Another point I cannot help noticing is in connection with the conveyance of distinguished persons to this country. There is an item for the conveyance of the Crown Princess of Germany from Calais to Dover. She is a very distinguished personage; she is the daughter of the Queen, and the future Empress of Germany, and I admit that every possible distinction should be paid to her; but my objection is that the line is not properly drawn. Here is the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburg—who is she, and what is she? She may be some relative of the Royal Family—I do not know about that; but, if so, she is certainly not a person of the same rank as these other Royal personages who have been carried across the waters of the Channel. Then there is another peculiar fact I noticed, and that is this—that here you have the Crown Princess of Germany and the Duchess of Edinburgh crossing the Channel, and only on one occasion the Princess of Wales—she does not seem to tax the country in the same way other Royal personages do. There is another item I want some explanation of. It is a noteworthy fact that when a General is going to take command of a Station in India he gets his passage money paid. I find an item here for the quarter ending 31st December, 1886, "The Duke and Duchess of Connaught to Calais from Dover, £140." If the country paid his passage money from England to India, are we to be called on here to pay a supplementary sum for his transit from Dover to Calais? If so, it is most extraordinary; and I hope some explanation will be given. I cannot help calling attention to it, because we all know the Duke of Connaught has been in India, and that we had to pass a Bill to bring him home from India to attend the Jubilee. I cannot see what purpose this item is for, except it is for part and portion of his voyage to India. I hope I shall receive some explanation of this and the other points I have raised.

MR. JACKSON: I am afraid I can hardly hope to convert either of the hon. Gentlemen who have addressed the Committee upon this particular question, because their minds are pretty well made up, and anything I could say would not alter their convictions. With regard to what the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) said about the £200 for the Lord Lieutenant, I think it is worthy of consideration. I understand £100 is paid, on the occasion of the Lord Lieutenant crossing, to the owners of the vessel, and not to the Lord Lieutenant; but I will make inquiries into the matter. With regard to the item of £480, referred to by the hon. Member for the Camborne Division (Mr. Conybeare), I am one of those who think it is not a very large sum; and I cannot agree that it is either fair or reasonable to speak of these persons as being lodged and fed at the expense of the ratepayers, for it is nothing of the kind. But I will not follow the hon. Member into a discussion as to which I am sure we should not agree; and I would rather appeal to what I venture to call the sense of the Committee. With regard to the larger item of equipage money, to which the hon. Member for the Camborne Division called attention, I have to say that is according to an old arrangement which, I admit, looks rather an odd one. This item represents £3,000 of Irish money; but whether that is another injustice to Ireland I cannot say; it is a sum that has always been paid, and that is the only explanation I have of it. Provision for carrying out the duties of the Office have to be made at very great cost, and I should be very much surprised if any Lord Lieutenant ever came back the richer for holding the Office.

Dr. TANNER: He gets his salary.

Mr. JACKSON: He would get his salary for the time he is in Office; and, whether that is long or short, the outlay upon his taking Office is the same.

Dr. TANNER: What is the equipage money for?

Mr. JACKSON: It is for general outfit, if you like.

Dr. TANNER: Carriages and horses?

Mr. JACKSON: Yes; and if you have a Lord Lieutenant you would wish him to support his position in a manner that would give satisfaction to the people of Ireland. I should be very much surprised, as I have said, if any Lord Lieutenant came from Ireland richer than he went.

Dr. TANNER: The hon. Gentleman asks, "Is this another injustice to Ireland?" This equipage money is an injustice to Ireland, and I think I shall be able to show the hon. Gentleman why that is so. I asked him what this money was for, and he said "carriages and horses." Well, everyone knows that in Ireland we have got very good carriage manufacturers, and men who can build as good a carriage as any in the City of London. Then we also know that Ireland is a country where horses are bred; and even Members who sit on the other side of the House constantly come over to buy horses in Ireland. What is done with this equipage money? What has the present Lord Lieutenant done? He goes to a contractor here in the City of London, and pays this money away in the City of London instead of spending it in Ireland. If there is money to be paid by Parliament into the pockets of the Lord Lieutenant, at any rate let Parliament give him a chance of spending the money in Ireland. The hon. Gentleman does not understand the way in which this money has been spent. I can assure him that I learnt it from an official source a few years ago, when I knew some gentlemen connected with the Viceregal Court in Dublin. What the Lord Lieutenant did then, and I am assured since, was to go to one of these large contractors in London and order his carriage and horses here and send them across. I think, perhaps, that some of the hon. Members who do not agree with us on some of the other points, on this particular point will agree with me that this is a standing injustice to Ireland, and ought not to be allowed to continue.

Mr. DILLWYN: A great portion of the reply of the Secretary to the Treasury in justification of the expenditure was that it was what had been done before. That is a very Conservative mode of reasoning; but there is one point that deserves consideration, and that is the point which my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) called attention to—namely, the item for the passage of the Duke of Connaught from Dover to Calais. I remember I demurred to the Bill for bringing the Duke of Connaught over here, and we were told on that occasion that the expense would not be charged to the public funds. This is a matter, therefore, that requires some explanation. There is only one question I would ask before we come to the vote. I would like to know upon what principle these Supplementary Votes are drawn up? As I understand it, the Supplementary Votes ought to be Votes for some expenses incurred since the original Estimate was drawn up. Many of these items ought and must have been seen before the Estimates were drawn up; and therefore I should like to know upon what principle they are drawn up?

Mr. JACKSON: The Supplementary Vote is certainly a Vote which is supplementary to the ordinary Vote; and it is further supplementary in this sense—that its service either could not be foreseen, or the amount of it could not be known when the original Estimate was prepared. The hon. Member for Swansea is an old Member of this House, and he knows there is at the disposal of the Treasury an item called the Civil Contingency Fund, used for matters not otherwise provided for in the Vote, and a Vote has to be taken in order to repay the Civil Contingency Fund for the advances made from it. He asks me a question in regard to the passage of the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. If the hon. Member will be good enough to look at the Estimates he will see these sums are made up to the 31st March last; and therefore these special items have nothing to do with the ordinary Estimates.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): I cannot help thinking this Vote deserves censure. One-thirtieth of our population are paupers, and I think we incur great responsibility in voting money away for such a foolish thing as the equipage of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Here we are voting £3,000 for the Lord Lieutenant and £320 for the Prince of Wales crossing the Channel eight times last year. I must say I think we endanger loyalty in this country by these small sums coming up in this offensive way time after time.

MR. CONYBEARE: I wish to say one word with respect to the way in which I propose to proceed in respect of the Motion I have made. I would rather not take a Division on the first item respecting the Lord Lieutenant, but on the two last items connected with the special payment; and that for the reason that my hon. Friend the Member for West Belfast desires to bring before the Committee some matters in respect of municipal charges. I would like to say this to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury with respect to the equipage money. His reasoning was not convincing, the ground put forward being that because these things were done in the past they should be done in the future. If his argument is worth anything—namely, that the Lord Lieutenant is put to a great preliminary expense, and therefore ought to have this subsidiary and equipment money, I would point out that as these occasions do not very frequently arise the proper mode of proceeding would be to come and ask for a Supplementary Vote when they are put to this necessary expense, and do not get their salary for more than a very short period. To make up a constant charge, instead of a mere temporary and exceptional charge, is what we have a very great right to protest against. However, as I sympathize with the grievance of our friends in Ireland, I will not object to this money being granted, provided it is spent in Ireland; and if we have such an assurance I will not press that item.

THE CHAIRMAN: There would be no difficulty about the hon. Member for West Belfast moving any Motion he desires. Does the hon. Member withdraw his Motion?

MR. CONYBEARE: I will withdraw my Motion so far as that item is concerned.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is not necessary for the hon. Member to withdraw in order to accommodate the hon. Member for West Belfast.

MR. CONYBEARE: I will withdraw the Motion, and move it in another form.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. CONYBEARE: I beg now to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £680.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £5,289, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 21; Noes 118: Majority 97.—(Div. List, No. 458.) [2.30 A.M.]

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SEXTON: This Vote contains several items for the expenses of Municipal Charter inquiries for 19 places in different parts of England. Among these I do not notice the name of Haslingden. I am aware that some time ago the occupiers and ratepayers of this place presented a Petition, signed by two-thirds of their number, praying for a Charter of Incorporation. I have looked through their statement of facts upon which their request is founded, and if it is well-founded I should be surprised if their Petition were refused. I cannot understand even why it should be delayed, for the place is far more populous than many municipal towns; it is growing rapidly; and, looking through the figures in relation to taxation, one can see that it is a thriving and important place. Seeing that so large a proportion as two-thirds of the rateable occupiers support the Petition, I should like to know on what grounds it is refused or delayed, when there is such a strong *primâ facie* case in its support? Another item of the Vote to which I wish to call attention is the sum of £47 17*s.* 10*d.* for the payment of medical expenses of officers injured during the Belfast riots. The Constabulary officers, incapacitated from duty by reason of injuries sustained, were few; but there were 400 men of the police force and the military injured on that occasion, and tended in the hospitals of Belfast. On consideration of this a grant of £800 in aid of these hospitals, which are supported by voluntary subscriptions, was promised by the late Chief Secretary; but I do not find that this has been carried out. Unless I ascertain that the Government have paid the expenses incurred in the hospitals on account of the wounded men of the military and civil force I shall move to expunge this item from the Vote, for I do not understand why this medical attendance should be paid for, and not that of the men who did all the fighting, and received most injury.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: This is a matter that has not come before me during my tenure of Office of Irish Secretary, and I am sorry to say I have not the information the hon. Gentleman desires. Certainly, nothing has been said or suggested to me with regard to payment to these hospitals; but I shall be glad to make inquiries, and give the hon. Member all the information I can.

Mr. JACKSON: As to the other question the hon. Member has raised, I am not in a position to give the hon. Member information; but I will cause inquiry to be made. I could not know that the hon. Member was going to raise the question, inasmuch as it is not connected with any item in the Vote.

Mr. SEXTON: It is a question that affects 60,000 inhabitants.

The CHAIRMAN: It is not a matter to discuss on the Vote; it is a matter of the policy of the Home Office and the Privy Council. This is merely a question of payments made.

Mr. SEXTON: I do not wish to discuss it. Unless the Government tell me there will be an inquiry I will move to reduce the Vote.

Mr. JACKSON: It is not possible for me to give an answer to the question, about which I know nothing. But I will inquire, and I think the hon. Gentleman might be satisfied with that assurance. It is not a matter in the Vote, and therefore I could not anticipate the question coming on. I say I will make inquiry and ascertain what has been done, and then I will inform the hon. Gentleman. If then he is not satisfied it rests with him to take what course he thinks best.

Mr. SEXTON: The Petition from Haslingden has been presented among these others, and it seems a strong *primâ facie* case.

The CHAIRMAN: This is a Vote for the repayment of expenses paid last year.

Mr. SEXTON: This Petition was presented last year. I move to reduce the Vote by £200 in the absence of any satisfactory assurance in regard to this matter.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £5,869, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Mr. CONYBEARE: I do not wish to trouble the Committee with any remarks. I only want to say, as the Financial Secretary has promised, at the instance of the hon. Member for West Belfast, to make inquiries into a particular case, that I wish to ask him if he will also make inquiries in respect to Loughborough—an almost similar case? I have had the matter brought to my notice and have been asked to do something. I therefore ask the hon. Gentleman to make it the subject of inquiry.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 15; Noes 117: Majority 102.—(Div. List, No. 459.) [2.45 A.M.]

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee to sit again *To-morrow*.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [5th September] *reported*.

First Eleven Resolutions *agreed to*.

(12.) "That a sum, not exceeding £50,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the execution of certain Public Works, and the promotion of certain Industries in Ireland."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory): I desire to bring under the notice of the House—and I will speak very briefly at this hour—two items in this Vote, £5,000 for the drainage of the Barrow, and £7,000 for preliminary inquiry and plans in reference to parts of the Barrow and the Bann. I want really to get some information in regard to these matters. The £5,000 provided in this Vote is a very small sum indeed considering the work to be accomplished. The Royal Commission has recommended not a loan but a gift of £75,000 for these purposes. The Royal Commissioners use these very remarkable words—

> "We think that in this case the Government may treat the improvement of this extensive tract of country as of national concern, as the injuries are very wide-spread."

Now, I think the Government will see that the sum of £5,000 is a mere flea-bite compared with what will be required. The entire cost will be something like £350,000, and of this the Commission recommended the Government to give £75,000. Now the first question is, do the Government really mean to carry out, to any thorough extent, the recommendations of the Commission with this £5,000 as an instalment of £75,000 to be presently granted? Then another question I want to put to the Government is whether they really intend legislation on the subject? But first I ought to mention that there is a strong feeling in the district that no more money need be expended on preliminary inquiry. The Royal Commissioners have sketched the history of what has been done. The Barrow drainage survey was practically executed as far back as 1847; and, I think it has been revived in various forms since. In 1882 there was a survey and valuation, half of which was carried out by the Government. In 1885, Lord Spencer appointed a Commission for the purpose of considering the matter, which reported in the next year. That, also, resulted in nothing, and now we have the elaborate Report of the Royal Commission to which I have referred. It would seem with all this we have sufficient information already, and I want to know whether the portion of this £1,200 which is going to be granted for preliminary expenses, in connection with this Barrow drainage, should not be spent on the actual drainage itself. Another question is, whether this is to be followed by legislation. The Commissioners say, the entire scheme cannot be carried out without legislation, and they lay down certain lines on which that legislation must proceed. Now, if that is so, I want to know definitely, and I hope the Chief Secretary recognizes the importance of the question, whether this legislation will be brought in early next Session, or whether it will be allowed to hang on from month to month and from Session to Session. I can indicate the importance of the question, when I mention that it has been reported that a bad state of health, bordering on pestilence, exists at Portarlington, and the medical officer of the district, after consultation with others, arrived at the conclusion that nothing could be done to remove the danger until the Barrow is drained. The local officer declares, that if a fever were to break out at any time in the neighbourhood the consequences would be disastrous; and at this time of cholera epidemics, the importance of proceeding rapidly with the works is evident. I may mention before I sit down, that the whole of this area the catchment of the Barrow, 700,000 acres, 46,000 are subject to periodical inundation, so, under the circumstances, there is every reason to proceed with the matter at once. The people say they would prefer a less expensive scheme than that recommended by the Commission, and that there was an excellent scheme devised by Messrs. Lewis and Stoke to cost £153,000, but as to that I, knowing nothing of it, do not commit myself. At a meeting, held on August 17, to consider the whole subject, resolutions were passed urging the Lord Lieutenant to proceed at once with the work and the formation of drainage districts. I hope this desire of the people to help themselves will induce the Government to do what they can to assist, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will reply to the questions I have put to him.

COLONEL NOLAN: I think the Government ought to be pressed to consent to an adjournment on this question. One of the great inconveniences of discussing such a subject on an occasion like this, is that we can only speak once. [*Laughter.*] Well, we allowed the Committee stage to go through without debate, and I think we ought to get an opportunity of expressing our opinions on this subject at some hour other than 3 o'clock in the morning, when it is idle to attempt to say a few words with any hope of their being reported. [*Laughter.*] It is rather difficult to enter into complicated details, when one is subject to interruption from the few hon. Members who are not sleeping. However, as my appeal meets with no response from the Government, I shall adopt the course of stating my argument as best I can, and possibly, I may conclude with a Motion. The first thing I have to point out is, the extraordinary system that has been followed. When the House consented to this Vote of £50,000, I dare say many Members were not aware how this sum is obtained. It is, with the exception of a small portion from the proprietors, money out of the small tenants of Ireland. This £50,000 is a corresponding sum in two amounts voted for England and Scotland £450,000 and £60,000, the one in the form of a grant for highways in England, and the other for Scotland, and voted for the first time to-night in pursuance of the remission of local taxation announced on the Budget night. But there has been no corresponding remission of County cess in Ireland, but the Government intended to distribute this £50,000 in consultation with the Irish Members. Now, first I object totally to this. I think that when you were giving large grants for highways in England and Scotland, members would have been more willing to relieve the tenants of Ireland from the heavy county rates they pay; in some parts of Connemara as much as 4*s.* 6*d.* in the pound, much higher than anything paid in England. Secondly, I object to the manner in which the Government have acted since the declaration on the Budget night. They have never consulted Irish Members; they have simply allocated this £50,000 according to their own fancy. Possibly a few county gentlemen, possibly a few Conservative Members, may have been spoken to on the subject; and I cannot say positively that no Member on this side has had an opportunity of expressing an opinion; but no message has been sent to the Irish Party generally. This proposal for taxing the small Irish farmers was determined on without consulting the Irish Members; it is a crying case in favour of a Home Rule Legislature, especially as the Government now insist upon taking the final stage of the Vote at an hour when the public can know very little about it. I will not say that every part of the scheme for distributing this sum of £50,000, contributed mainly by small Irish farmers, is bad; but I say you are taking upon yourselves an enormous responsibility without sufficient acquaintance with facts when you dispose of it without proper discussion and without submitting your proposals publicly or privately to the consideration of Irish Members. Now, first there is £12,000 for the Shannon. I was on the Shannon Commission; it was a mixed Commission, upon which, I believe, I was the only Home Ruler. All Parties were agreed that there was no gigantic work to be undertaken on the Shannon. All you have to do is to take off a certain amount of water, which you can take off by a stroke of the pen. [*Laughter.*] Yes; I will take it off to-morrow by a stroke of the pen if the Chief Secretary will give me his signature ordering the sluices to be opened. You keep up a certain amount of water in the interests of navigation; but as the Royal Commission recommended the interests of drainage should be consulted rather than the interests of navigation. But you have not done that, and you are now going into elaborate works to combine the interests of drainage and navigation. But I do not see the necessity of the large expenditure; all that need be done—and it will, I admit, lessen the conveniences of navigation —is to reduce the quantity of water in the Shannon, and that will satisfy everybody so far as drainage is concerned. Navigation would be interfered with to the extent of reducing the depth of water by about a foot. Upon this point you would do well to consult Irish Members before you take advice of engineers and embark upon a large expenditure, of which £12,000 is a beginning. Now, I come to the Bann. This question came before the Royal Commission, and it recommended that something should be done. I do not know that it is good policy to tax Kerry for the Bann drainage, taxing in the sense that you do not remit taxation because of this; but something has to be done. You have locked up the waters of Lough Neagh and put a dam across the upper part of the Bann; also for purposes of navigation, and I admit that something must be done. But the hon. Member for Queen's County has laid a policy before you, and has showed the enormous ultimate expense in which the country and the district will be involved, and this before it has been voted upon by any representative Irish Body or Party. You are doing a serious thing in spending this initial sum without giving heed to public opinion in reference to an expenditure of between £300,000 and £400,000, an enormous sum for a district in Ireland where there is little ready money. Passing over the piers and roads, to which items I do not object very much, I come to the amount to be devoted to the encouragement of the breed of horses and cattle in Ireland. Now, we know what has been done with £3,200 of the money; but we do not know what has been done, or is to be done, with the other £1,800. The £3,200 is given for 16 stallions selected by the Royal Dublin Society. Now, I do not know that the Royal Dublin Society was certainly the best body to have the selection, and I rather think that, instead of 16 stallions at £200 each, it would have been better to have had 32 at £100 each; but this is a matter of opinion. I do not blame the Government much for that; but you have not laid down any system by which farmers are to take advantage of what is offered, and are to send their mares. If you leave it to the selection of owners you throw the arrangement very much into the hands of the groom, or you leave it with the Poor Law Board, and unless you have recourse to the ballot—the only other way—you will find that a few farmers will be favoured at the expense of the many. And then I want to know what is to be done with the £1,800. I do not pay much attention to the other items, that for Donegal, and for the Munster Dairy School; in my county we have no large dairies, and I do not feel prepared to talk about that. As I have said, I doubt very much the desirability of what you propose to do in the way of drainage. You pick out three rivers, but it is not only in regard to the great rivers that drainage is wanted; the glands that feed the great rivers often require attention quite as much. In no case is attention more required than at Tuam. There a large amount, some £70,000 or £80,000, has been spent in arterial drainage, and that requires keeping up. There is no great river; but here and in many other places you may see the effect of arterial drainage, and can form an opinion as to what is required to be done. But, as was to be expected, engineers turn to the great rivers. I should not have selected the Shannon, and my hon. Friend has referred to the Bann. The Government are working in the dark, and are incurring a great responsibility in taking away money practically in the most unconstitutional manner. Practically, though I admit not theoretically, they are taking money never voted; they are taking the rates of the country and applying them to fancy purposes. I know they have not done it theoretically, but practically they have, because there are remissions allowed to the local rates of England and Scotland; but in consequence of the use to which these funds are to be devoted there is no corresponding remission to Ireland. To mark my protest, I beg to move the adjournment of this debate.

MR. PYNE (Waterford, W.): I differ from my hon. and gallant Friend——

MR. W. H. SMITH: I cannot help regarding this as wilful repetition of a discussion that has already gone far enough.

MR. PYNE: But I am speaking—[*Cries of* "Order!" *and interruptions.*]—You speak much more often than I do. My hon. and gallant Friend—[*Interruptions.*]

MR. SPEAKER: Order, Order!

MR. W. H. SMITH: I claim to move, Sir, "That the Question be now put."

Question put accordingly, "That the Question be now put."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 116; Noes 16: Majority 100.—(Div. List, No. 460.)

Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee on the said Resolution."

COLONEL NOLAN: I moved the adjournment of the Debate.

MR. SEXTON: On a point of Order, Sir. Was not the Question upon which we decided just now "That the Question be now put;" and is not the Motion moved by my hon. and gallant Friend now before the House that this Debate be now adjourned?

MR. SPEAKER: No Motion for adjournment was put from the Chair. It was not a completed Motion. An hon. Member was in the act of seconding the Motion when the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury claimed to move that the Question be now put. That Question, which I now put, is that this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution.

Question put.

The House *divided* ;—Ayes 115; Noes 16: Majority 99.—(Div. List, No. 461.)

Resolution *agreed to.*

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Postponed Resolution [2nd September] again read;

(1.) "That a sum, not exceeding £38,508, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, of Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland, including certain Allowances under the Act 15 and 16 Vic. c. 83."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. SEXTON: This Resolution has been postponed to the present time to allow us to bring forward matters of urgency in regard to administration in Ireland. I object to proceeding at this hour unless the right hon. Gentleman will promise that he will not immediately step in and stop discussion. If he should desire a further postponement I should be well pleased.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: We desire that the Resolution should be taken this evening. [*Cries of* "Morning!"] I do not understand there is any desire for a lengthy discussion. A reasonable discussion we do not object to.

Mr. SEXTON: I wish, in the first place, to get some information as to the action intended to be taken in regard to facts that have been elicited arising out of the Portrush disturbances, and I have to complain that the Government have exerted themselves to cast imputations on a body of my constituents, and to screen a body of men who were guilty of an organized and violent attack upon unoffending persons. The facts have come out one by one, not by the help of the Government, but in spite of them, that in former years the excursionists were attacked by an organized body of roughs as in the present year, and, further, that notice was given to the police of the intention to have the excursion, and the police took no adequate measures in consequence.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: On a point of Order, Sir. I think this discussion is one for the Police Vote, rather than for the Law Charges Vote.

Mr. SEXTON: I think not, because it has become a matter of criminal proceedings before a Crimes Act Court in County Antrim, and I desire to know what further proceedings the Government intend to take. I have said that the disturbances were the result of an organized attack on the excursionists, and my main point is this, to ask the Government whether, after the proceedings in Court, they will hold an inquiry into the manner in which an attempt was made to defeat the law, and into the evidence, in which it is evident there was a considerable amount of perjury? I maintain that the riot which led to this criminal prosecution was the result of an organized attack; that a body of men were sent from Coleraine to Portrush and their fare paid for this purpose, and the police constable, whose evidence established the fact, was insulted by a mob in Coleraine, and was the next day, by order from Dublin Castle, removed to Derry.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry to interrupt again, but I must ask whether this is a discussion for the Police Vote —whether it is a subject relevant to this Vote?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member appears to be dealing with two points, one of which is out of Order; the other is relevant to this Resolution.

Mr. SEXTON: What I desire to press is, that the Government will establish an inquiry, as they have the power to do so under the Crimes Act, into the allegations that these disturbances arose out of an organized attack. I ask for a reply on that point. Next I ask the Government what they are going to do in reference to the conduct of Major Lidwell, a magistrate in the Templemore district of County Tipperary. The only reply I have hitherto been able to get is the not material circumstance that the bridge blown up was not a bridge of stone. I said that Major Lidwell had blown up a bridge, and I say it is a serious thing to allow a magistrate to indulge in violent conduct of this kind, and that a magistrate should be made amenable to the law, and taught that he cannot indulge in such violence with impunity. The information I have is from Mr. Ryan, a solicitor of Thurles, and is to the effect that about 11 o'clock on the morning of Sunday, the 22nd ultimo, Major Lidwell, accompanied by other persons, went to the bridge that connects the farm of one of his tenants with the road, and which bridge Major Lidwell had sought to prevent the tenant, Patrick Stapleton from using, and there and then applied a charge of dynamite and blew up the bridge, hurling the *débris* into the yard, killing several fowls, and injuring a woman named Kennedy. Patrick Stapleton was not at home, but Mrs. Stapleton and her children were there at the time. Major Lidwell then retreated, and the bridge was repaired as far as possible. But Major Lidwell returned about 9 in the evening, and exploding another charge completed the work of demolition. His language was then most violent, and going to the house where Mrs. Stapleton was with her children threatened to blow them and the house into the elements, demanded the names of the neighbours who had assembled, and left after giving utterance to more threats. Mrs. Stapleton reported what had occurred to the police, and has since been informed that the police were waiting for instructions from the authorities. This is more than a fortnight since, and the matter is still left in doubt. I have put a Question in the House, and can get no answer. Meanwhile, this magistrate who goes about on Sunday exploding dynamite, endangering the lives of women and children, is still sitting on the Bench when he should be dismissed with ignominy from the Commission of the Peace. I ask has any decision been come to; and, I only add, that common regard for the administration of the law and the credit of the Executive should induce the Government, without loss of time, to make this man amenable for his shameful and cowardly outrage.

MR. MACARTNEY (Antrim, S.): I would just like to draw attention to the fact that Members from Ireland who sit on this side have asked that there should be an inquiry into the disturbances at Portrush. There is the greatest possible indignation in Antrim at what has happened, and we are most anxious that the fullest possible inquiry should take place.

MR. SPEAKER: That point is out of Order. We are now engaged with another matter; but I am bound to say I do not see how it is applicable to the Vote. I do not see how the conduct of Major Lidwell is connected with the Vote.

MR. SEXTON: Perhaps the Attorney General for Ireland will be allowed to say if an inquiry has taken place, and will a prosecution be obviated?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): I can only say that in the materials at present before me I find no ground for a prosecution.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): Is a magistrate to go about acting the dynamiter on a Sunday morning——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I have ruled the subject out of Order, as having no relation to the Vote. I permitted the Attorney General for Ireland to answer a question put to him; but I must say I think there is no connection between the remarks of the hon. Member and the particular Vote with which the House is asked to agree.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON. If you will allow me, Sir. [*Cries of* "Order!"] I will not attempt to argue the matter, and respectfully submit to the Chair. But may I be permitted to say that the answer given by the Attorney General for Ireland—[*Cries of* "Order"]—shows me, as a Member of the House, that this is the view he takes of his duty as a conservator of the law, and how he earns his salary, and what is the class of men who are allowed to go without fear of prosecution in Ireland.

MR. SPEAKER: The remarks of the hon. Member are not pertinent.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 114; Noes 15: Majority 99.—(Div. List No. 462.)

Resolution *agreed to*.

DEEDS OF ARRANGEMENT (No. 2) BILL [*Lords*.]—[BILL 381.]

(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 5th September.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Sir Edward Clarke, Chairman.

Clauses 1 to 6, inclusive, severally *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Form of register).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 113; Noes 11: Majority 102.—(Div. List, No. 463.)

Clause 8 (The registrar, and the office for registration).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I beg to move that the Chairman do report Progress. No explanation has been given of this Bill, and among the Members now present there are few lawyers, and this is a lawyer's Bill. This is one of the many grounds upon which I might support this Motion. Another ground is that we require some explanation of the effect of the Bill upon existing deeds of arrangement, especially as regards Ireland. There are doubts in the minds of some as to how the Bill will affect deeds of arrangement not registered.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do now report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Richard Webster) (Isle of Wight): The hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Clancy) has quite forgotten the history of this Bill, or he could not possibly have made the observations he did. The Bill is actually the same, word for word, as when it went through the House on a former occasion, and every clause was carefully discussed. The hon. Member for Kilkenny discussed the Bill from an Irish point of view, and proposed several Amendments, which I accepted. The Bill was read a third time with the full assent of the House, including many Irish Members; but owing to a technical slip it became a lapsed Order, and had to be re-introduced, and the stages of the Bill had to be repeated. I am sure the hon. Member cannot be aware of this, and cannot require me to repeat my statements in reference to the Bill, or give Members the trouble of walking through the Lobbies. There are no doubt stages of other Bills to get through, and if he insists I will not proceed with this; but I appeal to the hon. Member, now he knows the state of the facts, to allow the Bill to go through Committee.

Mr. CLANCY: I respect my hon. Friend the Member for Kilkenny very highly; but it is not because he sets his imprimation on the Bill that we should all do the same.

Sir RICHARD WEBSTER: You discussed it in Committee.

Mr. CLANCY: The hon. and learned Gentleman is mistaken. I never said a word upon it. I never saw or heard of the Bill before. Another reason why we should not proceed in spite of the hon. and learned Gentleman's assurances is that I myself intended to move an Amendment to Clause 5.

The CHAIRMAN: Clause 5 has been disposed of.

Mr. CLANCY: I only say I would have moved an Amendment if I had had an opportunity. It is an additional reason why Progress should be reported. Another reason is, that although the explanation given of the character of the Bill looks very plausible, last night an explanation was given of another Bill, which according to a letter in *The Times* this morning——

The CHAIRMAN: I must ask the hon. Gentleman to confine his observations to the Motion to report Progress.

Mr. CLANCY: I thought my observations were relevant to that.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): I would ask the Attorney General, out of justice to himself, and consideration for the Committee, to defer further discussion of this Bill. On the last occasion when this Deeds of Arrangement Bill was before the House, I asked him to defer it until such time as hon. Members who took an interest in it were present to take part in the discussion. I hope the good sense of the hon. and learned Gentleman will prompt him on this occasion to some deed of arrangement that will conduce to the benefit of himself and the House.

Question, put, and *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Rectification of register).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I now move the Motion to report Progress, and I think the Attorney General will be disposed to assent to it.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: Of course, there is other Business to be got through, and I did say I would not press this against any resistance. But, inasmuch as I presume the other clauses will be taken without opposition, they may be taken to-morrow, and we need not proceed further now.

MR. SEXTON: I have no objection intrinsically to the Bill, but I should not be surprised, after the extraordinary conduct of the Government to-night in relation to the case of outrage I felt it my duty to put before the House, I should not be surprised if this and other Bills met with opposition.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow.*

BANKRUPTCY (DISCHARGE AND CLOSURE) BILL.—[BILL 327.]

(*Mr. Attorney General, Mr. Solicitor General, Baron Henry De Worms.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clauses 1 to 14, inclusive, severally *agreed to.*

Clause 5 (Provision as to release of trustee).

On the Motion of Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL, the following Amendments made:—In page 3, line 5, after "official receiver," insert "or official assignee;" line 9, after "him," insert "personally;" line 13, after "official receiver," insert "or official assignee;" line 14, after "official receiver," insert "or official assignee;" in line 17, after "him," insert "personally;" line 18, leave out "or," and after "made," insert "or liability incurred."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again on *Thursday.*

MERCHANT SHIPPING (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL.—[BILL 348.]

(*Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Jackson.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Short title and construction).

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N).: May I ask for some explanation of this Bill?

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): It is purely of a technical nature, and is simply to carry out the recommendation of the Committee on Public Accounts that certain monies now paid to the Exchequer should be paid to the Mercantile Marine Fund, and also to bring within the definition of lighthouse any improved means of lighting, or apparatus for fog signalling.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (Fees on examination of engineers to be paid to Mercantile Marine Fund).

On the Motion of Baron HENRY DE WORMS, the following Amendments made:—In page 2, line 2, by leaving out "paid," and inserting "payable;" in line 4, by leaving out "paid," and inserting "levied;" and, in line 5, by leaving out "paid," and inserting "levied."

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 3 and 4 severally *struck out.*

Clauses 5 and 6 severally *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Explanation of meaning of lighthouse).

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 12, after "signals," insert "and the expression 'new lighthouse' shall include the addition to any existing lighthouse of any improved light, or any siren, or any description of fog signal."—(*Baron Henry De Worms.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

COLONEL NOLAN: I should like to have some explanation of this and what is the object of it. The clause has that objection in the drafting that it does not explain itself except to a person technically acquainted with the subject. The whole thing is set down by a reference to the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854, and it is impossible to understand it unless one has acquaintance with that Act.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I shall be glad to give an explanation. The hon. and gallant Member is possibly aware that very great improvements have been made in the lighthouses around the coasts of England, Ireland, and Scotland, and it has been found necessary to provide for expenditure on additional apparatus; and it has, therefore, been necessary to include various appliances within the definition lighthouse.

COLONEL NOLAN: And there is no alteration in the dues?

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: No alteration at all.

DR. TANNER: It appears to me that a great part of the clause is superfluous. Should I be in Order in moving the omission of the words from 1854 to the end?

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes; after the present Amendment is disposed of.

DR. TANNER: I do not want to offer any factious opposition; but I may say I have visited some 20 or 30 lighthouses, and I found all these foghorns and other apparatus in existence; and I really cannot see why so much attention should be paid to these minute additions to the clause.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: I can assure the hon. Gentleman the words are absolutely necessary; and a considerable number of lighthouses have not the elaborate apparatus he has seen in some.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (Repeal).

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON (Kerry, W.): I desire now to move to report Progress.

SIR RICHARD WEBSTER: There is only one more clause.

MR. EDWARD HARRINGTON: We have had scant courtesy shown us to-night. I make my Motion firmly and decidedly, and it will be my duty to carry it through. We should not now proceed with any more Business. I consider we have not been fairly dealt with, and the reason why I say so will be present to the minds of hon. Members opposite. But I need do no more than urge the usual physical reasons for reporting Progress—that we have been 14 hours at work, and we have to meet again at noon to-day.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Edward Harrington.*)

MR. SEXTON: I should have thought the Government would have had something to say on this Motion. I shall support my hon. Friend to any extent. We have been the victims of an outrage here to-night. I have been seven years in Parliament and have never before been treated in a similar manner. However, I pass from this for the moment to return to it again and again. I intend to be here to-morrow for the purpose; and there are good physical reasons for the Motion now.

DR. TANNER: I support the Motion also. Last Friday we had a very late Sitting; and a right hon. Gentleman found fault with me that I was not in my place at noon on Saturday to ask a Question of which I had given Notice. But it is a physical impossibility to do without rest. We see the physical disability under which the Attorney General is suffering at the present moment—the lassitude he displays. I am sure hon. Members should be in accord with us on this occasion.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: I hope the Committee will not agree to the Motion. This is a purely technical Bill, it is absolutely necessary, and there remains but one undisputed clause to pass. I must be allowed to say that the opposition to this last Clause of the Bill can only be characterized as obstructive and unfair. I cannot agree to the motion to report Progress, and feel assured that in resisting it I shall have the support of all hon. Members on this side, and in fact of the majority of the Committee. I trust that the Motion will be withdrawn and the Bill allowed to pass without further delay.

COLONEL NOLAN: I think we have behaved very well; and I cannot understand why the hon. Gentleman should get up in a manner I might almost call ferocious. But I suppose that as some animals usually harmless become fierce in defence of their offspring, so I suppose the hon. Gentleman, putting aside his usual genial manner, is annoyed at opposition to a measure to which he is much attached.

I cannot agree with my hon. Friend that the Attorney General has shown any lassitude; on the contrary, I think he has been very clear and lucid in his explanations. But remember two hours ago the Government considered time of so much importance that they hurried and slurred over important Irish Business, exhausting all the Forms of the House to get rid of it. Curiously enough they now do not want to go. But really I think we might close Business now, and I think the hon. Gentleman might be satisfied; we have cleared away all the Amendments to this Bill.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): In the interests of peace may I be allowed to make a suggestion? Things look awkward at the end of this prolonged Sitting. I believe the reason why Irish Members support this Motion, that they evince this desire to stop Business, is that they are very much dissatisfied with an answer given to the hon. Member for West Belfast by the Attorney General for Ireland. I do not wish to interfere in the matter at all; I only make a suggestion. I really believe if the right hon. and learned Gentleman were to get up and say he will make further inquiry into the matter, in which so much interest is displayed, if he were to say that before the end of the Session he will take an opportunity of explaining the matter more fully, I think it might greatly facilitate progress now.

MR. GIBSON: In answer to the hon. Baronet I may say inquiry is being made into the subject. That inquiry is not complete. A Question has been given Notice of for Thursday, and that, I think, will be the most convenient time to refer to the subject. I said that on the materials before me, it was not in my power to direct a prosecution.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Schedule *agreed to.*

Bill *reported*, as amended; to be considered *To-morrow.*

House adjourned at ten minutes
before Five o'clock in
the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Wednesday, 7th September, 1887.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Coal Mines, &c. Regulation (251); Labourers Allotments (252); Charity Commissioners (Officers) * (254); Tramways (War Department) * (255).

Committee—Report—Metropolitan Police * (242).

COAL MINES, &c. REGULATION BILL.

(*The Viscount Cross.*)

(NO. 251.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS), in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he took that opportunity of tendering his own thanks, and those of the Government and the country, to the Royal Society for the trouble they had taken in the matter of coal mines. In the year 1879, he had the honour, as Home Secretary, to ask them whether they would join, or send some of their members to assist, the Royal Commission which was then appointed for the purpose of seeing how accidents in mines could best be prevented. The Royal Society met that appeal in the most handsome way, and several of their most distinguished members served on the Commission. The labours of the Commission lasted for a period of six years; they went minutely into a long series of experiments, and while he was quite sure the results of those experiments would tend greatly to the safety of life and the prevention of accidents, it was satisfactory to know that they had also added very much to their own scientific knowledge, because he believed the members of the Commission all candidly admitted that in the course of their investigations they made several discoveries about gases and other matters that were absolutely unknown to them before. The result had been that a great many of their recommendations had been embodied in that Bill. He would only mention two matters to show how necessary it was that an inquiry should take place. The first was that it seemed to have been discovered in the course of the inquiry that what miners had hitherto been in the habit of looking upon as one of the great sources of safety, was in reality one of the great sources of danger—namely, the safety lamp, which, in certain respects, had been rendered unsafe with the improved methods of ventilation, causing a greater current of air to run through the mines. Another discovery they made, which he believed also would have a great effect in the future safety of life—namely, that a great many accidents happened, under certain conditions, not so much from the gases which came from the coal, as from the dry coal dust that pervaded all parts of the mine. He did not think it would be wise or necessary to trouble their Lordships with any explanations in detail of the mere machinery for carrying on the work of the mines which were laid down in the Bill. He would only say that he believed the Act of 1872, which was passed by Lord Aberdare, had worked very great good, and was in itself an excellent Act; but an experience of 17 years had shown that it required amendment in various details, and where possible all those amendments were contained in the present Bill. He begged to move its second reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

Lord BRAMWELL said, he did not rise for the purpose of objecting to the second reading, but he had received a letter which he felt bound to read. It was from the executors of Colonel Hargreaves, of Burnley, Habergham, and Marsden Collieries. It was as follows:—

> "We trust your Lordship will excuse us calling your attention to a clause in the Coal Mines Regulation Bill now before the House of Lords, which, if passed into law, would most prejudicially affect the colliery proprietors of this district and also the colliers themselves, seeing that it would inevitably lead to a reduced output of coal. The Bill, as passed by the Commons, prohibits the payment of colliers by measure, and provides that henceforth they shall be paid by weight (except in the case of collieries employing only 30 men underground, when a Secretary of State may under certain circumstances grant exemption from weighing). The effect of this would be materially to reduce the output at large collieries, such as exist in the Burnley district. Under the existing Act of 1872, section 17, colliers are to be paid by weight, unless the mine is exempted by a Secretary of State. The whole of the collieries in this district are exempted, and the colliers are and always have been paid by measure. No disputes occur, there is no confiscation of tubs, and the best feeling exists between masters and men. The clause in the Bill appears to be the outcome of trade union agitation—"

he did not say it was any the worse for that—

> "but, as the colliers in the Burnley district are non-unionists, the delegates have no right to interfere."

He need not trouble their Lordships with any more, except to say that the remaining part of the letter suggested that the clause should be altered so as to continue the exemptions which at present existed. This was a point on which their Lordships were legislating in the dark. When there was any interference with private contract a reason should be given, and at present their Lordships were destitute of any. It was, he submitted, a matter deserving of consideration, because it seemed a strange thing that where the employer, the employed, and the Secretary of State were all content with the arrangement, nevertheless it should not be allowed except where the employed were fewer than 20.

Viscount CROSS said, he would convey to the Secretary of State for the Home Department what had fallen from the noble and learned Lord. He had an Amendment to propose to-morrow on that particular clause, and suggested that then would be the most convenient time to consider the point raised by the noble and learned Lord.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL.

(*The Viscount Cross.*)

(NO. 252.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading, read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

Earl SPENCER, alluding to the very scanty appearance of their Lordships' House, there being only 13 noble Lords present, said, that fact was not very encouraging to anyone to rise to discuss a subject of great public importance; but nevertheless he thought it necessary to make some remarks on the subject of the Allotments Bill. And first of all, on the part of Members of their Lordships' House, he might complain not only of the period at which the Bill had been introduced, but of the exceedingly short Notice that had been given between the first and the second reading. It was only that very morning, when he happened to be in the country, that he saw the Bill had been read last night a first time. He was travelling up to London on other business, when he discovered that the second reading was to be taken this evening. Now, he did not think that such short Notice of an important measure of the sort was conducive to the convenience, or even the credit of their Lordships' House. He could quite understand the desire to bringing to a conclusion so prolonged and arduous a Session; but he thought Her Majesty's Government might be blamed in this matter. Ministers had evidently changed their minds in reference to the necessity of such a measure. The Bill excited great interest, not only in their Lordships' House, but elsewhere, and Questions were asked as to when the Government were going to introduce this measure, which he believed was one of the measures mentioned in Her Majesty's Gracious Speech from the Throne. On the 16th of May, in answer to a Question in "another place," the Leader of the House stated that the Government were anxious to bring in the Bill, and added that it would be introduced in "another place;" and, later in the same evening, the President of the Local Government Board intimated that the Bill would be brought in at once without delay. On the 16th of June, Lord Dunraven introduced a measure on the subject, and he was met by the noble Lord (Lord Balfour) on the part of the Government, who said that the Government were anxious to see legislation dealing with allotments, and, if possible, to support it to a finality in this House. On that occasion, the Prime Minister (the Marquess of Salisbury) spoke, and stated that he rather deprecated the introduction of a measure by the Government on this subject. The noble Marquess on that occasion had criticized the method in which the noble Earl proposed to deal with the question of authority, and had said that if they took some Central Body not concerned in the matter, the County Quarter Sessions, it might possibly deal with it in a perfunctory spirit, and, on the other hand, if they took the Local Sanitary Board or the Board of Guardians, there might be danger of abuse and of disturbance of the public peace. The noble Marquess had also given as another reason for not bringing in a Bill, the argument that they should wait until proposals for a scheme of local government were before Parliament, and the question was in some fair way of being settled. What, however, had the Government done? On the 16th of July, after the noble Marquess had said that he did not think it desirable to introduce a Bill on the subject until a measure of local government had been introduced, a Bill was introduced in "another place." What had made that change in the opinions of the Government? There was certainly one fact which had occurred which might have had something to do with it—namely, a certain election which had taken place on the 6th of July. However that might be, the Government had certainly put the cart before the horse by introducing an Allotments Bill without having introduced a large measure of county government, contrary to the speech of the noble Marquess; and not only that, but they had introduced into it both the authorities to which the noble Marquess had taken exception. He (Earl Spencer) thought that some explanation was really necessary of the course which Her Majesty's Government had taken. Why had they been so late in introducing the Bill, and why had they changed the opinions which they had expressed? He had no intention of moving any Amendments to the Bill; but he wished to say one or two words with regard to the principle. He most heartily approved of the main principle of the Bill, and he thought that everybody was in favour of increasing the number of allotments for the poor people of the country. There was no doubt immense advantage was given to the labouring man if, in addition to what he obtained for his wages, he could have an allotment whereby to supply his private wants as regarded vegetables, and it might add to his luxuries. He was glad to see both parties agreed upon this question. Many, no doubt, would have preferred to leave the question to be settled in the open market; but they knew that unless some compulsory powers were given for the acquisition of allotments, where the owner was unwilling to grant them, the number of allotments required could not be given to the poor agricultural labourers. He rejoiced that Her Majesty's Government had gone as far as they had done in enabling allotments to be procured; but, at the same time, he thought that there was considerable objection to some of the provisions of the Bill. He did not think that the Boards of Guardians would be very suitable bodies, as he was afraid they would not be sufficiently sympathetic with the poor in connection with this matter, and he thought that some disappointment would be felt at the Bill not being put sufficiently into force as much as the requirements needed. At the same time, it was extremely difficult to create a representative body *ad hoc*, especially one dealing with allotments; and therefore, though he did not altogether like the authority proposed, he was ready to accept it. As the Bill, however, was introduced, he regretted it had not gone a little further. He was glad that Her Majesty's Government had resisted the Amendment moved in the other House limiting the size of an allotment to half-an-acre. Although he considered that a man in full work could not deal thoroughly with as much as an acre, yet there might be cases in which a man might do so, and therefore it would have been a great mistake if the size had been restricted to half-an-acre. He thought, however, that the Bill might have gone further, and provision might have been made for dealing with a matter upon which a great deal of ridicule had been thrown, but which he maintained was of the greatest importance—namely, what was known as "three acres and a cow." In many places the labourers were not desirous of having three acres for pasturage, as they were not able to find a cow; but in many places this was not the case, and in his opinion it was a pity that the Government had not gone further than they had done, and included the possibility of giving to the agricultural labourers the opportunity of getting the three acres and a cow where they desired it. No doubt, the Government had dealt with the question under the system of common pasturing, and in some places that system had been a great success, although, in other cases, it might have fallen into the hands of one or two of the bigger men. When a man had a cow and food for it during the summer, he was obliged to have some other land where he could grow hay for its food during the winter. What he wished to know was whether there was sufficient power in the Bill to enable the Local Authority to provide also sufficient land in order that enough hay might be produced for the keep of animals belonging to the tenants of the allotments for their cows during the winter? He had known cases where this had really been carried out, and where the poor of the parish had a field where they could keep their cows during the summer, also additional land where hay was made for the winter. This, he thought, was a very important matter, and he would like to see that the point was dealt with in the Bill. He thought that the whole question was one worthy of being discussed at an earlier period of the Session and in a fuller House; and he would again ask the Government to explain why this Bill only now appeared before them?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ONSLOW) said, that the Government could not be expected to do more than pass a Bill into law in the course of the Session which they had announced in the Queen's Speech. As to the question of introducing it early or late in the Session, the Government must be guided in that by the state of Public Business as to when and in what House they should originate legislation. The noble Earl opposite (Earl Spencer) seemed to be of opinion that Her Majesty's Government had suddenly woke up to the possibility, as well as the advisability, of introducing an Allotments Bill. He would, however, call the attention of the noble Earl to the statement made by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Lord Randolph Churchill), in what was generally known as the Dartford speech, before the present Parliament. In that speech, the noble Lord had distinctly said that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to introduce such a Bill, and in answer to several Questions put in their Lordships' House by the noble Earls (the Earl of Dunraven and the Earl of Jersey), the Government had replied that they intended to introduce an Allotments Bill, but must be guided as to when by the state of Public Business. He noticed also that while the Bill had been severely criticized by the Friends of the noble Earl in the other House, the objections did not appear to go so much to the provisions as they did to the names of the persons on the back of the measure, and who were responsible for its introduction. The noble Earl had stated that the Bill now before their Lordships provided an authority which the noble Marquess at the head of the Government had distinctly condemned. Speaking from recollection of that debate, he (the Earl of Onslow) ventured to think that the noble Earl was in error, and that the authority which the noble Marquess had condemned was the County Authority, as having too large an area, and not Boards of Guardians.

EARL SPENCER said, that he had spoken from the noble Marquess's own words.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW said, that no doubt the Government admitted that the authority provided was not a perfect one; but the difficulty was, where they had not got a duly constituted Local Authority before them to find one, and he thought that the choice made by the Government was, in the circumstances, a happy one. He had heard many objections to the Bill; but he did not think they were directed against any of its clauses. He confessed he infinitely preferred allotments provided by landlords voluntarily; and the Government had expressly and wisely kept the principle of the voluntary supply of allotments in the forefront of the Bill, which provided that the Local Authority should only have power to acquire allotments compulsorily when the landlords would not grant them voluntarily. In the rural districts of England there was no very large unsatisfied demand for allotments; but it was necessary to embody in the Bill, as a last resort, the principle of compulsion. Where the Bill would do most good was in the neighbourhood of towns, near which artizans often experienced the greatest difficulty in obtaining land, however good might be the terms that were offered. He rejoiced, therefore, that an Amendment had been introduced in the Bill in "another place" directing that land near a town should be let for allotments on the terms applicable to agricultural land in the district. The object of the Government had been to make the Bill what it was—an Allotments Bill—and not a Bill to provide small holdings. He had the greatest doubt as to the success of small holdings; but he had no doubt as to the success of this system of allotments. Of the authorities that might be chosen to administer the Bill, neither the parish nor the Court of Quarter Sessions could fulfil the duties which the measure imposed as efficiently as the Board of Guardians. The tendency of recent times had been to diminish, and not to increase, the authority of the Vestry; and the area under the control of the Court of Quarter Sessions was too wide to permit of its taking cognizance of all the demands for allotments in every parish of the county. He confessed the Board of Guardians was not so satisfactory an authority as he should desire; but the Bill must remain, to some extent, in embryo, until the Bill was passed into law for the appointment of a Constitutional and Electoral Authority. There were some points in the Bill to which it was desirable to draw attention. In the first place, it provided that the labourers themselves, if they should so desire, should have the management of the allotments. As the parish would have to bear a certain burden when the Bill was put into operation, it was only right that in the hands of the elected of the parish should be placed the management of the allotments. That was also a valuable provision which dissociated the rates and taxes from the rent, for it would give every holder of an allotment a personal interest in the rise or fall of the rates, which was a very important matter. He should object very strongly to any proposal for giving every labourer three acres and a cow. The noble Earl (Earl Spencer) had expressed great regret at the absence of that provision; but if a proposal had been put in the Bill to give three acres, it would have led to great misconception and disappointment to the labourers themselves. There could be no doubt that at one time there existed in the minds of many labourers in England an impression that somehow or other by legislation each one of them would become possessed of three acres and a cow, and he was therefore particularly glad that these three acres had been kept out of the Bill. The area of an acre chosen by the Government he thought a very wise one; because, though in certain cases it might be too large, there was nothing in the Bill to compel the authority to give the whole acre, and if the Bill provided for more than an acre, he was convinced it would become not an Allotment Bill, but a Small Holdings Bill. A locality could not advantageously acquire enough land to make a plan of that kind feasible, and in the scheme would have to be included measures for the compulsory appropriation of farms. If ever there should exist means of appropriating large areas of pasture land, owners would find it very difficult indeed to let their farms. Then, the possession of a cow by every holder of a three-acre allotment would necessitate the erection of a cow shed and of costly fences by the Local Authority, who would practically be placed in the position of a landlord without his responsibilities. In the Bill, however, there was nothing to prevent a man from keeping a cow. The right of common pasture would exist, and in winter the labourer would be able to feed his cow on the produce of his acre allotment. There was nothing which tended more to make a peasantry happy and contented, and to secure their adhesion to the principle of property, than the ownership or occupancy of a small plot of land. Bearing that in mind, he looked upon this measure as likely to effect substantial good, and he asked their Lordships to read it a second time with equal confidence in its results.

Lord BRAMWELL said, that he heartily approved of the principle of the Bill, and believed that small allotments would add pleasure to the existence of many persons; that they would add to their means, and go some way to make them more contented. There was as much right to take land compulsorily at a fair price for that as for any other public purpose, and he believed that, with a wise discretion, the Government in framing it had not exceeded the limits of moderation and caution. He trusted that one result of the Bill would be to make the poor labourer feel that land did not exist only for the benefit of very rich and very great people. It was curious that although enterprise in this country had found many vents there was, as far as he knew, no record of the successful establishment of a Public Company for providing allotments; at all events, the cases were very few. This Bill made the ratepayers in certain districts, to some extent with their own

consent, shareholders in this doubtful concern so far as the providing of land was concerned. Therefore the Government were most discreet in not going further than was at once safe and necessary in the provisions of the Bill.

Lord DENMAN said, he preferred this Bill to that of the noble Earl (the Earl of Dunraven), which made the Bench of Magistrates decide on allotments. He felt certain that the greatest possible attention would be directed to each case as it arose before the Sanitary Committee, and afterwards before the Local Government Board. It must be borne in mind that on the Union principle of rating, the Board of Guardians had to consult the persons in the area of that Union, and therefore, in his judgment, nothing would be done rashly with respect to the allotments. He was glad to hear of the possibility that the Court of Quarter Sessions was not to be changed in its character. He feared that if the providing of allotments were added to the business of that body, it would turn it into a mere debating society, instead of keeping it, as in the past, the best business society in the county, which ought to be above suspicion.

Viscount CROSS said, he was glad to find that the measure received such hearty support from their Lordships. In answer to the noble Earl (Earl Spencer) who complained as to the time when the Bill was brought forward, he did not say that it was owing to the lack of more speedy procedure in "another place" the measure had not been brought under their Lordships' attention before. But "better late than never," and he (Viscount Cross) was glad to see it even at that late period, for he believed that most beneficial results would ensue from its passing. He proposed to take the Committee stage to-morrow.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House *To-morrow.*

TRUCK BILL.

CONSIDERATION OF COMMONS' AMENDMENTS TO LORDS' AMENDMENTS.

Commons' Amendment to one of the Lords' Amendments, and reasons for disagreeing to certain of the Lords' Amendments and Commons' consequential Amendment, *considered* (according to Order).

Commons Amendment, disagreeing to the omission of Clause 4 (Weekly payment of wages in Ireland) and Clause 5 (Workmen in Scotch quarries to be paid fortnightly).

Moved, "That this House doth insist on the Amendment made by this House to which the Commons have disagreed."—(*The Lord Clinton.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Commons' Amendments to Clauses 8, 9, and 12 *agreed to.*

Schedule.

Moved, "That this House doth not insist on the Amendment made by this House to which the Commons have disagreed."—(*The Lord Clinton.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY), in commenting on the uncertainty surrounding the repeal of the Acts mentioned in the Schedule, pointed to it as an illustration of the loose mode of drafting Acts of Parliament, in regard to which they were unable to understand whether Acts or parts of them were repealed or not. A little more care ought to be bestowed on the arrangement of a repeal or amending Act before it was submitted to Parliament.

Motion *agreed to.*

Consequential Amendment made.

LORD BRAMWELL said, he wished to call attention to Clause 12 (Artificer to be paid in cash and not by way of barter for articles made by him). When the question was previously discussed, the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll), who understood the subject thoroughly, earnestly protested against the clause. It seemed to him (Lord Bramwell) to contain a most unreasonable proposition; and he, therefore, asked their Lordships to adhere to their Amendment striking out the clause. The clause was really an enactment that makers of Shetland goods should not be paid in goods, but in money. What was the justification for such a clause? None that he knew of. The people were commonly paid in this manner, and were not discontented with it. He could not find any justification at all for putting an end to a system which was convenient, and against which no valid objection had been brought.

Lord DENMAN rose to speak, when——

VISCOUNT CROSS, intervening, pointed out that there was no Motion before the House.

LORD DENMAN said, that, having missed his opportunity by inadvertence, by not having the reasons in their order, he might, at least, be allowed to speak by the indulgence of their Lordships.

LORD HALSBURY said, that, of course, there was no absolute rule; their Lordships could do as they pleased; but not only had the clause in question been formally passed and agreed to, but another clause had been passed since, and he did not think there was any precedent for the course proposed by the noble Lord.

A Committee appointed to prepare reasons to be offered to the Commons for the Lords insisting on certain of their Amendments; the Committee to meet forthwith.

Report from the Committee of the reasons to be offered to the Commons for the Lords insisting on certain of their Amendments; read, and *agreed to;* and a message sent to the Commons to return the said Bill with an Amendment and reasons.

House adjourned at half-past Five o'clock,
till To-morrow, a quarter past
Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 7th September, 1887.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* —NAVY ESTIMATES, Votes 10, 10A, 3 to 5.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Considered as amended*—Merchant Shipping (Miscellaneous) * [348].

Withdrawn—School Board for London (Pensions) * [29]; Stipendiary Magistrates (Pensions) * [116].

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,207,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Naval Stores for Building, Repairing, and Outfitting the Fleet and Coast Guard, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888."

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): The Committee will recollect that when Vote 6 was under discussion I intimated my intention of moving the reduction of this Vote by the nominal sum of £5,000 with the view of raising the question of the expediency of appointing a Committee to inquire into the designs of vessels. I am raising it under great disadvantage in the absence of a number of hon. Members who agree with me as to the policy of such an inquiry, and I think it will be well if I were to state, as shortly as I can, why I think it would be wise, at the present juncture, to make such an inquiry. I do so in no spirit of hostility to the present Board of Admiralty, and although I propose to move the reduction of the Vote, I shall only do so in order to enable the discussion to be confined to this particular question, and I do not propose to divide upon it. At this moment, there is no proposal in the programme before us to lay down any new ironclads, and therefore there is no immediate subject of controversy. At the same time, I think I shall be able to show that that fact affords even more reason for undertaking the inquiry I suggest, because it can be entered into without any foregone conclusion on the part of the Government. I will, therefore, proceed at once to point out to the Committee why I think it is desirable that such an inquiry should be held.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): May I interrupt the right hon. Gentleman for a moment? I hope that the effect of his Motion will not be to shut me out from moving the reduction of the Vote, in Section 1, on account of stores for the Squadron on the Australian Station. I take it that the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman applies to Section 2.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: No;. I propose to move the reduction on Section 1.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: Is the Vote now under consideration Section 1?

The CHAIRMAN: Yes.

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): Section 2 relates to the hulls of ships; therefore, the question of design ought to be discussed upon Section 1.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The Vote includes stores to be used in building ships in the dockyards, and therefore the discussion I propose to raise will come in appropriately. I intend to conclude with a Motion; but, having caught the Chairman's eye, I claim my right to proceed. The Committee would recollect that early in the Session a Motion was made by the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Gourley) for the appointment of a Committee of this House to inquire into the designs of the vessels which have been built of late years. I could not myself support the hon. Member, because I considered, and I still consider, that it would be impossible to select a Committee of the House with sufficient technical information on the part of its members to be of real use and value in such an important inquiry. I therefore could not assent to such an inquiry. But it appeared, in the course of the discussion on that Motion, that there is in many parts of the House a desire for some inquiry of the kind. My hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed), who is a very high authority on the subject, made an important speech, in which he commented upon the types of the vessels which have been constructed during the last 15 years, and he commented severely on the designers.

Sir EDWARD REED (Cardiff): No, not on the designers, but on the designs.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: Then I will withdraw that statement. At all events, my hon. Friend commended severely on the types of the vessels. Later on the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), in a very powerful speech at Wolverhampton, followed on the same lines. The noble Lord went the length of saying that £10,000,000 had been absolutely thrown away and wasted in building armoured vessels during the last 10 years, and he commented in very severe terms on the designer — Sir Nathaniel Barnaby. These statements, coming from these quarters, led to a great deal of controversy in the newspapers, and it is impossible to deny that there is at the present moment a good deal of uneasy feeling on the subject of many of our recent vessels. In my opinion, it is desirable to take public opinion into account, and to institute some official inquiry. The question seems to me to be very much in the position in which it was in 1871. When hon. Members, who were Members of the House at that time, will recollect that there were great differences of opinion on the part of the public as to the vessels which had been recently constructed, and great doubts were expressed as to what type of vessels should be laid down in the future. A Royal Commission was then appointed, which was presided over by Lord Dufferin, and that Commission performed a very useful work and did immense good to the Naval Service in laying down principles for future guidance. As I have said, it appears to me that the position now is very much the same as it was then. There is the same difference of opinion among competent persons as to some of the vessels which have recently been laid down, and what the type of the future vessels should be. I think, therefore, it would be wise in the interests, not only of the public but of the Naval Service, to institute a new inquiry. It is quite true that in the immediate future there is no intention to lay down any of the largest class of iron-clads. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, speaking a few days ago, said that, in his opinion, it was possible or probable that no more iron-clads of the largest class would be laid down. I was glad to hear the statement of the noble Lord, and I quite concur with him if he confines his statement to the largest class of iron-clads—vessels of from 10,000 to 12,000 tons—subject, always, to the possibility of other Powers following our example. But I should feel inclined to think that the noble Lord is over-sanguine if his remarks were intended to relate to the next class of vessels, vessels of 6,000 or 8,000 tons. It is highly probable that, before long, or possibly even next year, we may have to lay down some armoured vessels of that size, and there is quite as much difference of opinion as to these types as in respect of larger vessels. It is now three years since we laid down any such vessels; we have been properly engaged in completing those in course of construction. The time is now coming when those responsible for the Navy will have to consider whether it will be well to lay down any further vessels of that kind. The French Government have been following our example. They have also been engaged during the last three or four years in completing vessels on which they have been engaged, and they have not laid down any fresh iron-clads of the class I am speaking of. These vessels are now near completion, and it is quite possible that before we meet next Session, France may have found it necessary to lay down more vessels of the class I have adverted to. If that be so, it might be necessary for the Board of Admiralty to follow suit, and I am afraid there is almost as much difference as to what the types of vessels of this class should be as there is in regard to the larger iron-clads. The French Government have already laid down a vessel of 6,000 tons, called the *Tage*, in which they have abandoned the system of plating to the fullest degree. This vessel is of a very powerful description, with a speed of 19 knots, and she carries a very powerful armament. If the French Government lay down other vessels of the same type, it may be necessary in self protection for the Admiralty to be prepared, before bringing in next year's Estimates, with some well settled policy in regard to future policy. In that view it would be wise to utilize the time in considering the types of the vessels we should build, and in laying down the principles which should guide us in the future. With respect to the vessels which have been constructed during the past few years, or now being completed, I do not propose to enter into a full discussion of their merits or demerits; to do so would necessitate a much longer speech and discussion than I should be justified in inflicting on the Committee at the present moment, nor do I think it necessary to vindicate the reputation of Sir Nathaniel Barnaby, who is quite able to take care of himself with his pen. I will only say that I think it very wrong, and not very fair, to concentrate all the attacks on Sir Nathaniel Barnaby, and to hold him solely responsible for all the vessels which have been built during the last 10 or 15 years. I need hardly remind the Committee that Sir Nathaniel Barnaby served as Chief Constructor for something like 16 years under successive Boards of Admiralty presided over by men such as the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr.

Goschen), the late Mr. Ward Hunt, the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith), and Lord Northbrook, and with a succession of very distinguished Admirals as members of those Boards. No iron-clad, I believe, was ever laid down during that time without the fullest and most careful and most minute consideration of all its details, and without the approval of all the members of the Board responsible for the laying down of such vessels, and also of the Comptroller; and they were equally responsible with Sir Nathaniel Barnaby for the results, provided there was no mistake in calculations, which I do not believe to have been the case. If my experience goes for anything in such a matter, I undertake to say that no vessel has been laid down without each member of the Board, civilian and naval, alike having been consulted in reference to every important detail respecting such vessel, and without each taking upon himself an individual responsibility for it. I need hardly say that the successive Boards of Admiralty to which I have adverted have included among their ranks some of the most eminent men in the Admiralty, who were equally responsible with the Chief Constructor for the vessels laid down. It is probably true that in some cases Sir Nathaniel Barnaby, the Constructor, has not been altogether satisfied with the vessel he may have been officially compelled to design; but every armoured vessel must, to a great extent, be a compromise; it is impossible to obtain perfection, or to construct an ideal vessel; some qualities of great value are always sacrificed to others, which at the moment are considered more important and valuable. It may well be, and it is of the very nature of things, that a vessel having been once determined upon, and a compromise arrived at between the naval element and the scientific element of the Board, that the vessel agreed upon may not, perhaps, have succeeded in obtaining the entire and full approval either of the designer or of the naval members of the Board. In such matters there must in the nature of things be a compromise, and the vessel finally designed is the result of a mutual arrangement. As I have said, I do not propose to go in full detail into the character of the vessels which have been built during the last 10 or 15 years. I believe that many of the vessels built during the last 15 years have not been exactly as Sir Nathaniel Barnaby desired, because he had to make concessions to the Board in respect of qualities which they thought more valuable. Apart, however, from exaggerated language which has been used on the subject of these vessels, it must be admitted that there have been two very distinct schools of naval construction applicable to the larger class of vessels, each of which has had very able and powerful advocates among constructors and among naval men; and both, I doubt not, actuated by the same sense of public duty. The one school is represented by the late—and, I believe, by the present—Chief Constructor, and the naval men who have been responsible of late years at the Admiralty, and the other by the hon. Member for Cardiff, and by high authorities also among naval men—that, I think, may include among them Sir Arthur Hood of the present Board of Admiralty. At all events, the very highest Naval Authorities and the highest constructive authorities among the designers of vessels are among the two schools. Starting a few years ago with the *Devastation*, a vessel of 10 or 12 inches of armour all round her hull at the water line, the last of that type of vessel built, the late Chief Constructor and those associated with him in the responsibility for the successive vessels which have been built since have endeavoured to meet the constantly increasing demand for thicker armour, to meet the heavier guns and their greater penetrating power by abandoning armour-plating over the extremities of vessels and concentrating it, as far as possible, over the vital portions of the vessel; and they have provided for the safety of the vessel by armoured decks below water, and by arrangements for utilizing the coal bunker and cellular spaces. The weight of armour has remained the same for vessels of the same size, but it has been restricted to certain parts of the vessel, and whatever weight could be economized has been devoted to engines of greater weight, and therefore to securing greater speed. On this principle successive types of vessels have been constructed, beginning with the *Inflexible*, the *Ajax*, the *Agamemnon*, the *Colossus*, and the *Admiral* class, and going on to the *Sanspareil.* Other countries have been compelled to proceed in the same direction. The Italian Government have carried this policy to the fullest extreme, for they have been building six vessels with no less than 14,000 tons with 18 knots of speed, while they have practically abandoned armour-plating altogether, except as a protection to the engines and the guns. The French also have gone to some extent in the same direction. They have preserved armour-plating at the water line of their vessels, but have abandoned it largely as a protection to their crews and their guns when loaded, although they use it as a protection for the guns while loading, which is, of course, an important distinction. We may be said to have proceeded about half way between the policy of the Italian and the French Governments. I think I am justified in saying that the noble Lord when he came into Office in 1885 inclined to the other school; when, by the advice of Sir Arthur Hood, he laid down the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar*, in which armour-plating is used to a much greater extent than in the vessels I have referred to. It is recognized and admitted now that the designs of these vessels did not meet with the approval of either the late or the present Chief Constructor, who were of opinion that, although these vessels are very powerful and valuable for certain purposes, too much is sacrificed to this immense weight of armour, and that they are deficient in speed and in weight of armament as compared with the more recent vessels of the *Admiral* class. I have no desire to re-open the controversy in regard to these vessels, but I merely mention the fact as bearing upon the question I have to bring under the attention of the Committee. The noble Lord the Member for South Paddington said, in his speech at Wolverhampton, that the construction of these two vessels is conclusive condemnation of all the 18 built before them, and that the money spent on them has been thrown away. I may, perhaps, use the converse argument that, if the 18 other vessels were constructed on a right principle, the *Nile* and the *Trafalgar* are unnecessary, and that the £2,000,000 which they cost would have been better spent in other directions. For my part, however, though I objected last year to the construction of these vessels, at all events, without the appointment of a previous Committee of Inquiry, believing them to be unnecessary, yet I have never denied, but, on the contrary, have always admitted, that they would be powerful and valuable vessels, though not so powerful as they might have been; and I think most reasonable men who belong to the other school will make the same admission with respect to the vessels built of late years of the other type. I believe that too much concession has been made to the principle of supplying armour on the sides, and that it would have been better if a higher rate of speed had been obtained. But, in fact, it is not necessary for either party to this controversy to accuse the other of gross negligence or ignorance, or to suggest that they are only concerned in an official ring who are laughing at the country. We must admit that there are these grave differences of opinion on the subject of the types of the vessels, and I cannot but think that it would be wise, in the present state of naval construction, and in view of the great controversy which has arisen, to refer the question to an independent Committee of Inquiry, on which some of the ablest men in the country should be invited to sit. The noble Lord stated, not long ago, as an argument against this course, that practical experience of ships would be better than any such inquiry; but I would remind him that the most important points for consideration are in respect of matters where there can be no trial except in case of war. With the exception of the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*, which will not be completed for two or three years, we have specimens of all the different types afloat at this moment. I believe, then, for the reasons I have placed before the Committee, that an inquiry such as I have suggested would be of the greatest value. We have reached a point where there is a very great difference of opinion, and when there is a certain lull in the building of vessels of the largest type, and therefore an unusual opportunity is presented for a full and complete inquiry upon the subject. My own belief is that such an inquiry, whatever its results, would minimize or reduce the points of difference between the two schools of construction to which I have adverted. I have confidence that it would lead to reassure the public as to the value of the vessels we have constructed of late years, and it would be of great value in laying down principles for the guidance of the Board of Admiralty whenever it may be considered necessary to lay down new vessels of a larger class. For these reasons I propose to formally move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £5,000, in order to raise a discussion, and to give Her Majesty's Government an opportunity of expressing their views with regard to my suggestion. In conclusion, I desire to say that I entirely approve of the programme of new work which is proposed for the year, and which has been drawn up by the present Board of Admiralty, by which it is proposed to build a certain number of swift and heavily armed cruisers, with regard to which the principle of altogether abandoning armour-plating above water-line is to be carried into effect. They are, I understand, to be merely what are called "protected vessels," although vessels of considerable size. I also fully concur in the policy of the present Board in building some, at all events, of their new vessels by contract instead of building all of them in the Dockyards. I think it is most important, at all times, that some of the new vessels laid down should be built by contract, if only for the purpose of enabling a comparison to be constantly made between the work done in the Dockyards and by contract. I think the noble Lord has done well in resisting the pressure brought to bear upon him in certain quarters, to lay down all these vessels in the Dockyards; and I quite concur in his policy of building some of them by contract. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £5,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,202,000, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Sir EDWARD REED (Cardiff): Nobody, I think, can doubt the fairness and the moderation of the speech to which we have just listened. I wish I had the same confidence in the views of my right hon. Friend as I have in the spirit with which he has given expression to them. My right hon. Friend seems to think that this is simply a question of unavoidable compromise, and that particular designs could only have been improved by the sacrifice of other qualities. I think that my right hon. Friend has altogether mistaken the nature of the controversy that has existed and exists with regard to the different types of ships. What is it that my right hon. Friend says? He says that he is willing to allow that the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*, with their heavy belts of armour, are very good ships, and he asks that similar approval shall be extended to the partially-armoured ships which have been built during recent years. Now I have no hesitation in saying at once, that if the fault I have to find with Her Majesty's ships was only the excess of armour, I never should have found fault at all in this House, because I am of opinion that matters of that kind are not fit subjects of controversy in Parliament. While the right hon. Gentleman is willing to accept the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*, and while he gives them a certain amount of modified approval, he asks me and others to extend the same approval to the ships which we have condemned, not for any excess of protection, but because we believe they are deficient in protection, and that they are not worthy of the name of iron-clads at all. That is the nature and the basis of the controversy which has been going on for a number of years. It opened with the case of the *Inflexible*, and my right hon. Friend asks the House to assent now to the appointment of a Royal Commission. I suppose he would be quite satisfied with a departmental inquiry if the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) would promise to constitute an independent Committee. But what happened in the case of the *Inflexible*? There was a Conservative Government in power at the time, and at length, and after repeated discussion, hon. Members taking an interest in the Navy, who were sitting on the Government side of the House, refused to support the Government in their resistance to all inquiry, and demanded a special and independent Committee. The present Lord Ravensworth put himself prominently forward in arguing that there should be an independent and impartial inquiry, and the late Sir Stafford Northcote ultimately rose in his place and promised that an inquiry should be conducted by men who were wholly independent of the Admiralty, or Admiralty influence, while in "another place" the Duke of Richmond gave a specific pledge that nobody on the Committee should be in any way connected with the Admiralty. But how was the Committee composed? It consisted of an Admiral who, if I mistake not—although a very distinguished officer—had been Chairman of one or two whitewashing Committees; secondly, of a gentleman — Dr. Woolley — who had been Director of Admiralty education, a gentlemen of eminent qualifications, but who was in receipt of an Admiralty pension; thirdly, of a gentleman, the late Mr. Froude, who was receiving £1,500 a-year from the Admiralty for conducting experiments in his own private garden, and fourthly of one of the contractors for the ship. That was the Committee which was appointed to investigate the case of the *Inflexible*, and I wish to know whether it could be called an independent Committee? The Committee expended months over the subject, and if it had not been for the Questions which I and others—put to the Government, in all probability a longer delay would have occurred. The Report of the Committee was of little value. My right hon. Friend says he does not think a satisfactory Committee could be formed out of Parliament, but I am of an entirely contrary opinion, and I am ready to say that the only Committee I would ever consent to, or take the slightest trouble about, would be a Committee of Parliament, and for these reasons: in the first place, this House possesses half-a-dozen or even a dozen Members who are perfectly competent to sit on such a Committee; and, in the second place, it would be a more independent and satisfactory Committee than any other body of men nominated at the suggestion of any Minister whatever. My right hon. Friend, no doubt —and the whole of his speech showed it—labours under the impression that the questions at issue in this matter are purely technical questions, and no doubt it has been the game of the Admiralty, all the time, to impress everybody with that idea, in order to keep the responsible Minister altogether out of the controversy. But that is not the case at all. The question, which I for one have raised, has been one which appeals to the common sense and common judgment of any intelligent men. I complain that the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary to the Admiralty, and other high Admiralty Officials, have been too much the servants and slaves of their own official advisers, whose first business has been to impress them with the fact that the matter is a technical one, about which they do not, and cannot, know anything. I do not agree in the opinion which has been expressed by the Chief Constructor, and the late Chief Constructor in regard to the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*. They are ships which I myself would not have designed, because they have more armour than is necessary. That, however, is not, in my opinion, a matter with which to trouble this House. I have never brought a complaint against them on that account; but, on the contrary, I have given the Government a steady support, because I have felt that vessels of this kind must carry a considerable weight of armour. No Member of the House has a right to challenge the Government for constructing ships which have a little more defence than he would have given them. But, at all events, that will not detract from their power as fighting ships. What we are entitled to consider is whether the Government are constructing for its first line of defence line of battle ships which are incapable of fighting a battle? When that is so, I think we are bound to enter a protest, and to challenge the course which has been taken by successive Governments. My right hon. Friend said the Italian Government have gone a great way in his direction. My opinion is that the Italian Government have not gone any way in this direction, although they have entirely abandoned side armour for their ships. The Italian Government have constructed ships without side armour at all, and with only deck protection, because they believe themselves incapable of contending in line of battle with certain other Powers, and therefore they have designed vessels of extraordinary speed and extraordinary armament which they are prepared to use in the best way they can in the event of getting into a war. I should not think of complaining of that policy on the part of a nation like Italy, and if we were anything but Great Britain, I should feel perfectly indifferent whether the Government adopted ships like that of the Italian Navy, or not. But what is our position? My right hon. Friend will excuse me for quoting a conversation I had with him, in which he admitted, speaking of some of the ships, that when the Admiralty put in a full coal supply, there would be little or nothing of the armour left out of the water, and they would, consequently, be at a great disadvantage if attacked after she left port fully loaded with coal. But he considered that their unfitness to fight on leaving our ports was not of great importance. Now, my answer is that that is precisely what we ought to be prepared for. I maintain that the moment a British man-of-war goes out of port with that on board which the Admiralty thinks necessary, if she is represented as a first-class ship, she ought to be capable of going alongside any enemy she may meet; and that is not what a protected ship with a full coal supply is capable of doing. That is the fundamental view I take. My right hon. Friend has given the Admiralty credit for building ships which he calls "protected vessels," the characteristic feature of which is that they are denuded of all protection. The Government can, if they please, protect vessels—that is to say the buoyancy and stability of vessels—by armour, and they can, as the French have done, and as my right hon. Friend truly said, having protected the life of the vessel, make sacrifices as to the further protection which they may extend to crews, guns, and machinery. The great complaint I make against our ships is that we have sacrificed the ship itself in what we call "protected vessels" when we know perfectly well that they have no protection at all. The armoured deck below water-line does, it is true, protect the boilers and engines to a certain extent, but the moment these ships are seriously wounded between wind and water, they are lost and gone, and can only be saved by such devices as may be resorted to by the officer in command. They are not fighting ships in any sense, and under certain circumstances, they must be run ashore, or much weaker vessels will be able to overpower them before any serious resistance could be offered. I do not condemn the Admiralty for building ships like that. I do not censure them at all. I do not care how many of what they call "protected ships" they may build, because in the Navy of this country there is a use for every kind of fighting ship. I defy the Admiralty to build a ship which will not be found of some service in the wide field in which the British Navy is employed. I do not, therefore, make any complaint as to the building of various types of vessels; but what I do complain of is the abandonment of the elements of fighting qualities at close quarters, and under severe conditions. The right hon. Gentleman approves of the Board of Admiralty building second-class vessels, but he knows perfectly well that a second-class vessel of 6,000 tons must of necessity be a compromise, and a serious compromise. No naval architect or naval officer will deny that a vessel of 6,000 tons must be deficient in one or two important respects. The only conceivable chance which this country has of holding its own against any sudden contingency which may arise in Europe is by taking care that it has some vessels—we do not want many of them—which no gun, or any number of the enemy's torpedoes which may be brought against them could sink, and which, if it were thought desirable, might be grouped into a squadron, and sent into the ports of the enemy to do the work of destruction. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty has said that he does not intend to lay down any more first-class ships. His language was a little doubtful. I do not know if he meant to say that it was not in the present purview of the Board of Admiralty, looking at the state of the ships now in progress, to lay down any more first-class iron-clads, or whether he is prepared to say what my right hon. Friend attributed to him—that he does not intend to build any more first-class iron-clads at all. If the noble Lord has arrived at that conclusion, and goes as far as that, he has given England up, because as soon as this country ceases to build first-class iron-clads, other countries will produce them; and I know, at the present moment, that the hope, expectation, and desire of certain Powers which are anxious to compete with us are that this determination to build no ships capable of fighting a battle shall continue to prevail in this country. For my part I hope it will not. I trust that the noble Lord who has now been some time in Office, will not maintain the doctrine that we are not to lay down iron-clads but those which an enemy could easily dispose of. If he does, he will have my determined opposition; but whatever he may say at public meetings, I am not in the least afraid that any First Lord of the Admiralty will be able to take such a step. My right hon. Friend has said—"You object to a Departmental Committee, and you object to a Royal Commission. Would you recognize as a fitting tribunal a Committee of this House?" Now, I say that the tribunal I want to see set up is the responsibility of the Minister. My complaint is that ships have been built without proper consideration, and that if Sir Nathaniel Barnaby had designed ships to be built bottom upwards, and had placed his designs before Lord Northbrook with powerful arguments in support of them, Lord Northbrook would have accepted them. My right hon. Friend has said that every ship built by Lord Northbrook underwent careful inquiry before it was laid down; and I recollect a Member of Lord Northbrook's Board, a Naval Lord, stating at a meeting of professional men, that if the Admiralty could have foreseen the introduction of small machine guns they would never have laid down ships of the *Admiral* class. But surely anyone ought to have foreseen that small guns would come in the moment you offered your ships to be destroyed by them. What has been the character of the ships built during the last 10 years? This is not a personal question. Years after I left the Admiralty I had not a fault to find with any of the ships that were designed. It was only when ships with diminished armour and weak arrangements were brought out that I became a critic of them. There is not a Naval Member of the Board of Admiralty of Lord Northbrook who will contend now that the ships which have been designed during the last 10 years are satisfactory. What is the principle which has been adopted? My right hon. Friend asks us to agree to give a general approval to the principle he supports, on the ground that he can give a general approval to ours. But my main difficulty is this. Take the case of the two latest ships—the *Victoria* and the *Sanspareil*—put before us as splendid vessels by Lord Brassey. It is proposed to send them to sea to fight the battles of the country as first-class iron-clads. Now, if they are inclined to such an angle as would result from a careless consumption of coal, the armoured part, on the side towards which she is inclined, would be completely immersed, and these first-class British iron-clads would have ceased to be iron-clads at all. We are told that these ships would carry an abnormal supply of coal; but when they do so the armour is submerged. I cannot—I wish I could—go with my right right hon. Friend in the *couleur de rose* view he takes of the ships we have; but I confess that I have great anxiety in regard to them. As was stated by the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill), we are in the position of having spent many millions on ships condemned by the Naval Service as unfit, not for all purposes, but for maintaining the power and honour of this country, even in our own waters, against the possible enemies they may meet. My right hon. Friend is, in my opinion, mistaken in holding that this is a matter of unavoidable compromise. That is what the Admiralty designer has tried to persuade us. Take the two vessels I have mentioned—the *Victoria* and the *Sanspareil*. They have 1,200 or 1,400 tons of armour, which does not contribute at all—or, if it does, in a way which is not worth mentioning—to the armoured buoyancy and stability of the ship; and my contention has always been, and will always be, that we cannot afford one mass of armour and place it here, and another mass of armour and place it there, for a totally different purpose, but that we are bound, to the fullest extent, to make all the armour contribute to the safety of the ship, and of the men, as well as to the safety of the guns and the machinery. My right hon. Friend spoke of Lord Dufferin's Committee laying down principles. I agree that it did so. That Committee was not appointed, as my right hon. Friend supposes, because of a general distrust as to the number of our ships. The Committee of 1871 was appointed for this reason: The Admiralty had persisted in placing their confidence in a ship which capsized and drowned 500 or 600 of Her Majesty's seamen. It was then that the Admiralty thought that a good means of diverting public attention would be to set a Committee to work upon ships in regard to which nobody had cast any doubt at all. They, therefore, placed the whole armour-clad Navy under the investigation of Lord Dufferin's Committee for no other purpose than that of screening and getting away from the catastrophe of the loss of the *Captain.* But that Committee did useful work and laid down certain principles, although those principles were set at nought, and to this day have never been adopted. No principles will ever be adopted that are worth anything until the Minister of the day is made responsible. If I, myself, believed that the Government were contemplating the construction of only unarmoured ships, I would move the reduction of £5,000, the salary of the noble Lord, and not a reduction in Vote 10. Sooner or later the House of Commons will have to make the Minister responsible. I do not believe in shifting the responsibility on to Committees. I am quite sure that we have not had, for many years past, a Minister—certainly not Lord Northbrook—who has not himself contributed to the evil, by putting himself so much in the power of his subordinates. We are told that the present Constructor and the late Constructor of the Navy constitute a school which is altogether hostile to that to which I am supposed to belong. Now, the present Chief Constructor of the Navy is the only person occupying the position of a Naval Constructor I ever encountered who has defended the ships I have condemned, and it is my belief that he would not have been Chief Constructor now if he had not defended Sir Nathaniel Barnaby's ships, and if he gets the chance he will give effect to some of the extraordinary views of his predecessor in Office. I look upon the authority he has with the Board of Admiralty as a ground of suspicion, and a ground for watchfulness. I am glad that my right hon. Friend withdrew his suggestion that I had attacked the designers of the ships. I think anyone who is acquainted with the question will bear me out when I say that I have done nothing of the kind. Of course, we all know that it is impossible to attack a series of ships without more or less—by implication—attacking the designers of those ships; but I maintain that I never attacked anybody personally except Lord Northbrook. He is the person I have systematically attacked, because I believe he had the power to prevent the evils which have occurred if he had chosen to exercise it. There is one thing I should like to say, not exactly in my defence, because I do not know whether there is any need for defending myself, but I desire to say that these questions are not questions that require Committees or Commissions, or bodies of that kind to inquire into them. I see in front of me the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), who is absolutely as competent as any man alive to give an opinion on the point I am about to mention. It is one which I am about to raise for the first time, and I do so because I am anxious to obtain an explanation. It is said that the *Conqueror* has been unable to fire her guns at sea when in a considerable seaway, because of the wash of the sea over her bows. Now, it is characteristic of several of the recently built and very large ships—ships of 10,000 or 12,000 tons—that they have bows which are not more than 11 feet in height. The *Victoria* and *Sanspareil* have been designed in that way; the total height of those ships out of the water forward being only 11 feet. Now, I believe that a very fast armoured ship with a bow only 11 feet high is perfectly incapable of chasing another ship in a heavy sea. I have reason to believe that the *Collingwood,* one of the *Admiral* class, the first time she came out of port at all was swamped forward by the sea. My opinion is that these ships are altogether incapable of performing the work of the country, and that they are incapable in a manner which cannot be alleged against any French ship of war of any great size. There is not a single ship I know of in the French Navy — speaking of the largest class of iron-clads—which is subjected to that defect. I am not dealing with this question in order to produce any alarm; but I believe that if the French were to send out their first-class iron-clads to-morrow, and we were to send out ours, we should find the French in a position to do what they liked and to fight their ships while steaming against a head-sea, whereas we could do nothing at all. That, I think, is a very serious matter. I am sorry to have found it necessary to occupy so much of the time of the Committee, particularly at this season of the year. My feeling is that if a Commission were appointed it would give a great deal of trouble to the Admiralty Department, and would possibly divert it from more useful purposes for a long time to come. It might also be a source of much mischief in the matter of designs, and no good would come of it. I think that all we can do is to take the consequences of the mistakes we make, and to make the Admiralty feel their responsibility, and feel that such mistakes are not easily got over by persons who hold specious and hollow views. There is one thing I wish to mention, which I believe to be applicable to this Vote, and I want to save myself the necessity of addressing the Committee again. I have read in the papers that several of the new vessels built by contract have broken down in their machinery. Now, I am not surprised at that, and I will give the Committee an instance of what I saw myself. I inspected one of these vessels when she was nearly complete; it is not necessary that I should name her. I saw her in the private yard in which she was built. There was no sailing work to be done in her at all, but she was one series of machines from beginning to end. There was not a sail to set, and the only thing a naval officer could do was to navigate her. I am sure the noble and gallant Lord (Lord Charles Beresford) will admit that the most onerous and serious duties in these ships have to be performed by the engineers, for there are engines from one end to the other. I saw an engineering officer on board. I had asked for him.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (Marylebone, E.): Of what class?

SIR EDWARD REED: I asked the chief engineer officer—"What is going to be your engineering complement; how many engineers are you going to carry?" Perhaps the Committee will scarcely believe it, but his answer was that he was going to carry himself alone, as far as he knew. Some time afterwards I saw it announced in *The Times* newspaper that there were to be in that vessel one engineer and four or five officers of the lieutenant class—that is to say, four or five executive officers with but little executive duty to be done, and one engineer for the whole management of the engines. That vessel ought to carry at least three engineers, in order that one of them might always be in charge of her machinery. No doubt, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will tell me that the engine-room artificers are a very good class of men, and that they are entitled to be entrusted with a certain amount of responsibility; but I should like to know whether any shipowner would dream of putting one engineer only on board of a vessel of great power, and especially a ship whose efficiency and success depended on her engines? It would be absolutely necessary that the one engineer officer in charge would have to be out of the engine-room two-thirds of his time. I was not surprised to find that three or four of these ships broke down in their machinery department during the recent trials. I have alluded to the fact not with a view of calling attention to this incidental matter, but to point out what is going on. We are told that we have not enough engineers, but we are continually seeing extraordinary attempts to keep down the engineering class. This is a very serious matter, for this reason, that the engineering class is the class which will have to keep these ships efficient from top to bottom. In a time of battle the value of the ships will depend upon the efficiency and sufficiency of the engineering class. It is certainly most unsatisfactory to know that a ship of several thousand indicated horse power, with a number of small engines scattered all over the vessel, are left in the care of only one educated and responsible engineer. There is only one other remark I desire to make. My right hon. Friend has referred to the *Tage*, in which vessel—a vessel of great power—he told us that France had abandoned side armour. Now, the reason why side armour has been abandoned in the *Tage*, which is only a ship of 6,000 tons, is that she cannot carry side armour, because she carries such an enormous weight of engines and coal. She can, therefore, only afford to have armour to protect the machinery. I thank the Committee for the patience with which they have listened to the observations I have felt it my duty to address to them.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) Middlesex, Ealing): Perhaps it would be as well that I should reply at once to the two speeches which have just been addressed to the Committee. I quite agree with the observation which fell from the hon. Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) that if any hon. Member has reason to find fault with the policy of the Board of Admiralty, the right course to take is to move the reduction of the salary of the First Lord. It is a much more efficacious method of attaching responsibility to anyone who occupies that position, than by moving the reduction of the Vote, which is absolutely necessary for the efficiency of the Naval Service. Just as the experienced naval officers of the Admiralty are responsible to the Board for their recommendations, so the First Lord should be personally responsible to the House of Commons for the designs adopted, and which he asks the House to sanction. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre)—who moved the reduction of the Vote—in a fair, candid, and temperate speech, stated that he did so more for the purpose of eliciting from the Admiralty their views with regard to the future construction of iron-clads than for the purpose of enforcing by a Division the suggestions he has made. The right hon. Gentleman wishes that either a Committee or a Commission should be appointed to inquire into the designs of iron-clads. I think, however, the right hon. Gentleman himself and the hon. Member for Cardiff have given conclusive reasons against the appointment of such an Inquiry. We have first to deal with ships in commission and that are built; next with those which are being proceeded with, and which will shortly be completed; and eventually we may have to deal with ships which may hereafter be laid down. As to the past, the vessels of the *Admiral* class—which have been a source of so much criticism—are being rapidly completed. One is already in commission and will be employed for the next 15 months. We shall then be able to test their utility as far as it can be tested by practical experience. No Commission, therefore, which can be appointed can be of any advantage as far as these ships are concerned, and on them a large sum of money has been spent. The next class of ships referred to will be completed in two years. The right hon. Gentleman has raised objections to the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*, but the hon. Member for Cardiff has given them a qualified approval. Considering the great discrepancy of view which exists among designers as to the war ships of the future, I may say that no two ships which have been laid down have been so little criticized as the *Nile* and *Trafalgar*. Neither Sir Nathaniel Barnaby nor anyone of any sort of experience has condemned those vessels. It is therefore clear that a Commission cannot be of much advantage as regards those vessels. The only advantage which a Commission would confer would be in guiding the decisions of the Admiralty as to the future. I have stated on more than one occasion that so far as the present Board of Admiralty is concerned, it is not their intention at present to lay down any more iron-clads. I use the word "iron-clads" in its proper sense—that is vessels clad in armour. The reasons why we do not propose to spend any large sum of money on this class of ship is, because we believe, after careful investigation as to the iron-clads in commission and in process of building by foreign nations, this country has established its supremacy in this particular class of vessel. I quite agree in the opinion that whichever Power has the strongest iron-clad fleet will command the sea, and therefore it is necessary, if we mean to protect our commerce, that we should have an iron-clad fleet superior to that of any foreign nation. A short time ago, France undoubtedly had a certain number of ships which were individually, in their offensive and defensive power, superior to any individual ship in the British Navy; but a considerable change has taken place since then in French naval policy. France laid down two large iron-clads in 1885, but she has ceased to spend any further money on this class of vessel since 1885; of the two vessels constructed, one has been converted into a transport, and the other into a cruiser without side armour. Since that time, however, the Board of Admiralty have laid down four powerful iron-clads, and I hope that these vessels will be completed within a period of from two to two and a-half years. Therefore the condition of the Navies of France and Great Britain, as far as iron-clads are concerned, is this—that we are stronger now by four iron-clads than we were in 1885, and France is weaker by two iron-clads. A careful examination into the strength of the iron-clad ships of the two respective nations shows conclusively that at no time since armour-clad vessels formed a main part of the Navies of the two countries has the relative superiority been so great as at the present time. It is our duty to maintain that supremacy; and if the Board saw any evidence on the part of foreign nations to spend large sums of money on this particular class of vessel, the Admiralty would have to reconsider their decision. I quite admit that the House ought to be consulted before any large expenditure is incurred in laying down any fresh iron-clads. But there is no question on which there is such a wide difference of opinion among naval experts. The hon. Member for Cardiff has always been an advocate for developing to a large extent the defensive power of iron-clads. Sir Nathaniel Barnaby, in his later designs, on the other hand, endeavoured to develop the offensive power of the ships, laying himself open to the criticism that, in endeavouring to attain that end, he was denuding the ship of the necessary protective power. As the *Admiral* class has been the subject of considerable criticism, I think it right to tell the Committee what the present condition of those vessels is. The hon. Member for Cardiff has always objected to the design of a narrow belt which does not go the whole length of the hull, and only protects the vitals of the ship. It is clear to anyone, that if the narrow belt is to be of real utility to a vessel, it is essential that the weight which the ship ought to carry should be most carefully considered, because the utility of the belt mainly depends on its being retained in a right position as regards the water line. Putting on one side the question of design as regards ships of the *Admiral* class, I admit that the business arrangements by which effect is given to that design are defective, because the weights which the ships have to carry are laid down and the armament decided upon after they have been begun. The consequence was that heavier guns were substituted for those originally designed, and they have been accompanied by an increase of weight which has made those vessels 18 inches deeper in the water than they were intended to be. In each case the top of the armour-belt is only from a foot to 18 inches above the water line, instead of 2 feet and 2 feet 6 inches, as originally intended. Profiting, therefore, by experience, the Admiralty have laid down rules providing that all the weights each vessel has to carry are to be most carefully considered and decided upon by the responsible officers, and that no alteration of those weights can afterwards take place except with the consent of the full Board of Admiralty. But we go further. In these days of rapid gunnery it is clear that no foresight can fully anticipate the extra weights which improvements may necessitate being added to the ship during the time of construction. The Admiralty have, therefore, recently passed a rule that, in the case of new ships laid down, a margin of 4 per cent shall be allowed, in order to prevent those miscalculations which have deprived these vessels of their full power and utility. Although this discussion has been free from personal observations, I cannot refrain from referring to a remark made the other day in a letter to *The Times* by Sir Nathaniel Barnaby. In speaking of his later designs, Sir Nathaniel Barnaby speaks of them as vessels under a cloud, which has been specially manufactured at Whitehall. I think it is a most improper observation for the late Chief Constructor of the Navy to make. The duty of every Board, whether personally responsible for the designs of the ships or not, is merely to give to the public what in their opinion is the value of the design. Both in the recent Minute, and in speeches in the House, I have endeavoured to place before Parliament the merits and the demerits of Sir Nathaniel Barnaby's past designs. So far from having specially manufactured objections against them, hon. Members have said that I have been too partial to those designs; and I strongly deprecate the idea that it is the business of any First Lord of the Admiralty to manufacture objections to any particular class of design. My business is to state fully and fairly what is the opinion of the professional advisers on the ships which are to be brought forward and added to the Navy, and the observations of the character which Sir Nathaniel Barnaby has made ought to be strongly condemned. I think I have now answered the questions which have been put to me by the right hon. Gentleman.

Perhaps I ought to allude to what were the reasons which influenced the appointment of previous Committees upon designs of ships of war. Those Committees have been enumerated by the right hon. Gentleman. With one single exception —there was the Committee of which Lord Dufferin was the President—those Committees were all appointed specially to inquire into the designs of individual ships that were either building or proposed to be built, and it seems quite clear that no Committee could, with advantage, examine into the designs of ships that are already built, and I have given the Committee an assurance that Parliament will be consulted before any large expenditure is incurred. I hope that assurance will get rid of the objections of the right hon. Gentleman. Now, the manœuvres which took place subsequent to the Review at Spithead, I think, on the whole, were satisfactory. No doubt, there have been certain defects shown in the machinery of certain vessels; but these manœuvres were held not for the purposes of mere show, but in order to ascertain weaknesses in our ships of war as well as in our system of organization. If next year the present Board of Admiralty are still in Office, they propose to continue these manœuvres; and I wish also to adopt the French practice of sending afloat at those manœuvres naval constructors and engineers, and the practical experience which they will thus gain, especially when these more modern ships are driving at full-speed, will, I anticipate, be of the greatest benefit to the Service. The hon. Member for Cardiff has asked me for information in regard to the break down of the machinery of certain ships. I think that, with the exception of the *Amphitryon*, the breaks down were not of a serious character. As to the smallness of the supply of engineers, that I believe is a difficulty which is every year being got over. No doubt, the *Amphitryon* and the *Leander* did break down in the recent trials; but we are hopeful that with further practice we shall be able to maintain the fully-estimated speed of these vessels over considerable distances without risk of damage either to boilers or engines. The hon. Gentleman asked me a question as to whether certain rumours are true that it has been found impossible to fire the turret guns of certain vessels in a heavy seaway, and he wished to know if it was due to the depth of the vessel in the water. Now, the depth in the water of the *Conqueror* and the *Hero* is exactly the same as that of two other vessels—the *Devastation* and the *Dreadnought*—which have given great satisfaction to the Navy. The difficulty of firing the guns in a heavy seaway was the reason which induced Sir Nathaniel Barnaby to fix the barbettes in the *Admiral* class vessels some seven feet or eight feet higher than they are in the turret ships. I have not the full reports before me in reference to the *Conqueror;* but what I understand is that, in a seaway, the *Conqueror* did unquestionably roll considerably. I understand, however, that she could fire her guns. I am informed that the barbettes, which are much exposed, can be effectually used at all times. I think I have now answered all the questions that have been put to me. It only remains for me to assure the right hon. Gentleman that the present Board have every desire to meet the House fairly, and will undertake to put the House in full possession of any designs or any proposed expenditure which they may think it their duty afterwards to incur in reference to ironclad building, although, as at present advised, and certainly as regards the programme for the current year, they do not propose to devote any sum for that purpose.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I think I should consult the convenience of the House if I were now to withdraw the Motion, in order to enable other questions to be raised upon this Vote. I said when I moved it that I had no intention of dividing the Committee, and that I had merely introduced the subject for the purpose of raising a discussion. I hope that the discussion which has taken place will not be without benefit to the country. I must say that I take one exception to the statements of my hon. Friend the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) and of the noble Lord—namely, that the proper way to raise questions of this importance is to move a reduction of the salary of the First Lord. Now, I am of opinion myself that that is not the proper way of bringing questions in reference to naval construction before the House of Commons. I think the proper way is to move the reduction of the Vote for the vessels which are intended to be built. At the same time, I am bound to say that I do not think, as a general rule, that discussions in this House as to particular designs are of any great benefit. That is the result of my own experience, and on that account I have always considered that when important controversies have arisen in this country as to what class of vessels is the best, the proper way of meeting the question is to appoint a Commission or a Committee. That is the course which was taken in 1871, with considerable advantage, and I am inclined to think, notwithstanding what the noble Lord has stated as to the present state of the controversy on this subject, that it would be wise to appoint a Royal Commission. I have been glad to hear from the noble Lord that he proposes to consult the House of Commons before he will undertake to lay down any new vessels of a larger class. That, at all events, will afford hon. Members an opportunity next Session of raising the question again. I am bound to say that the views I have presented to the Committee to-day are not merely my own views, but that they are shared by a considerable number of hon. Members, and still more by a large number of persons outside the House. There is only one point I wish to deal with, and it has reference to what the noble Lord said about the *Admiral* class. I am certainly not prepared to agree fully with all that he said. My impression is that when those ships were originally laid down, it was intended to put into them armaments of a certain weight. At a later period, it was thought well to increase the offensive and defensive power of the vessel by putting in her guns of a heavier kind, and it was thought desirable to do so even at the sacrifice of certain other qualities, and even at the risk of sending the vessel out of port somewhat more deeply sunk in the water than it was originally intended. No doubt, the decision was arrived at after careful consideration, and with full regard to the flotation of the vessel in the water. It was the deliberate policy of the Government that a vessel built to carry more powerful guns would be of more value than the ship it was originally intended to build, even if it resulted in the vessel sinking somewhat deeper in the water. Possibly that is a matter which, in future, may lead to some controversy. That is the change which occurred, and I do not believe that any miscalculation originally took place on this subject. I will content myself now with withdrawing the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I rise for the purpose of moving to reduce the Vote by the sum of £1,000, as a protest against the waste and extravagance of the Admiralty in bringing coals all the way from Wales for the guardships at Queen's Ferry on the Forth and in the Clyde. The coal is brought round by lighters, I believe at a cost of 13*s.* per ton, when Scotch coal can be had from within a few miles for 8*s.* or 8*s.* 3*d.* a-ton. In point of fact, this is an illustration of the old saying of "carrying coals to Newcastle." The Government say that Scotch coals are smoky, and waste the boilers of Her Majesty's ships, besides dirtying the flues, and all that sort of thing; but it is the fact that there is Scotch coal and Scotch coal, just as there is in Wales coal which is just as free from smoke as Welsh coal, if the Admiralty will only take the trouble to look for it. All I will say is that the wealthiest and most important and successful Trading Companies invariably coal in the Forth with Scotch coal, just as when in the Mersey they use Welsh coal, simply because in that case it is more profitable to buy Welsh coal. That, I think, is a complete answer to the allegation which is made by the Admiralty—namely, that these large and important trading concerns decline to waste their money. Their steamers are quite as good as those supplied by the Admiralty, and if they thought that the Scotch coal fouled their boilers they would undoubtedly prefer to use Welsh coal. They know better, however, and they save money by using Scotch coal. Foreign countries do not follow the example of the British Government in this respect. When they send their ships to the North Sea those ships go into the Forth and coal at Leith, and by so doing they are able to save the 50 per cent which the Admiralty throw away. I claim that this absurd system should be abandoned in the interest of the nation, and not merely of Scotland. I raise the question simply as a matter of national economy. The Admiralty think that they have been pestered by the Scottish people upon this question, and I think it is only right that they should be pestered until they consent to give way. This year they have intimated that if a vessel requires no more than 250 tons it may be supplied from Scotch coal, but that when a vessel requires a larger supply it should be obtained from Wales. Of course, the effect of this regulation is that the officers in command of Her Majesty's ships, only too anxious to obey the wishes of their masters, will invariably wait until they want 500 tons, in which case they will have to get it from Wales. That was the point I wanted to raise in connection with this Vote, and I hope I shall have a satisfactory answer to it. I do not wish to take up much of the Committee's time at this period of the Session; but with regard to Dockyard management, I should like to make one observation. I wish to give credit to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty for what I think he has been right in doing. I see that a deputation from the Dockyards has waited upon him in reference to the discharge of men, and I am glad to see the manly stand that he has taken. I am glad to notice that he has not hesitated to tell these people that the Dockyards exist not for the men, but for the nation. I am glad to see that he has taken care to economize and cut down expenditure where it is possible. I am quite sure that these men would do much better if they would trust to their own industry, and not look to the Dockyards to keep them there as a sort of charity. We have had bad trade in the North, and many men are idle on the Tyne and on the Clyde. These men do not come cringing to the Government, asking for relief; and I take it that the men in the Royal Dockyards should do as they do. I am glad of the remarks which the noble Lord made to these men, and I hope that the Government will continue to exercise that economy which is absolutely required in connection with the trade of the country. As to the Dockyards in the South of England, it is clear to any business man that the building of ships in that part of England cannot go on properly. The Yards are too far away from the source of supply, as far as the materials are concerned. Why did ship-building leave the Thames?

THE CHAIRMAN: I must call the hon. Member's attention to the fact that the Dockyard Vote has been disposed of a long while ago.

MR. MASON: I will not go into that point; but I thought that as contracts for ship-building, in connection with Vote, are going on now I might refer to them. I suppose I could criticize the contract for materials, which would come within the same line of argument; but I will say merely as to the materials that come under this Vote, that I should like to know why the Scotch makers of iron and steel are not in the list for the supply of these materials, and why they are far down in the list? I understand that everything connected with this matter is done by the Director of Contracts, who puts in the list whom he thinks proper, and takes off the list whom he thinks proper. I find that contracts are not given out—[Mr. FORWOOD dissented.] The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) shakes his head. But the hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Hanbury) the other day referred to the question of the Director of Contracts.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD) (Lancashire, Ormskirk): That was under the Army Estimates.

MR. MASON: Well, it is all the same. My point is, that none of the Scotch contractors, or very few of them, are in the lists. You must have respectable people on these lists, but you can extend the lists without deterioration in that respect. There are very few Scotch masters on the lists, and I know that they are capable of considerable extension. But I do not intend to detain the Committee further than to say that I consider this system of voting money by us here in the form of Estimates as simply a farce. You might just as well go to the corner of Parliament Street and call together 50 or 100 men to vote the money for the Services of the country, as call upon this House, in its present attenuated condition, to grant Supplies. How do we know what this money is to be voted for? What is the use of asking the House to come here and vote money unless we know what it is spent on? The sooner we stop the present system the better. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,206,000, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Mason.*)

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (A LORD of the ADMIRALTY) (Marylebone, E.): The question of coal is so important that I should like to point out how it stands. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark is quite right in saying that ships at Leith can be supplied with Scotch coal at 8*s.* a-ton; but I would point out that that does not include the cost of putting it on board the vessels.

MR. MASON: You could put it on board the vessels for 8*s.* 6*d.* a-ton at the very outside.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: Not, I think, on vessels lying in the roads.

MR. MASON: Yes; I beg to assure the noble and gallant Lord that that can be done.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: Well, I will not argue the point.

MR. MASON: No; for I know it.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I will tell the hon. Member that even if this Scotch coal could be supplied to us for 3*s.* a-ton, we should not use it in preference to Welsh coal. I have written down four or five reasons why we object to Scotch coal and prefer Welsh coal. In the first place, the evaporating power of Scotch coal is 20 per cent less than that of Welsh coal. In the second place, the Scotch coal is very smoky, a large portion of it going into ashes and clinkers, and the soot clogging the boiler tubes much more than that of Welsh coal. Thirdly, with Scotch coal the indicated horse-power is never so good, and full power cannot be so well maintained. More than that, there is a lot of heat lost in cleaning the fires and tubes. Then, notwithstanding the smaller cost per ton of the Scotch coal, in the long run it is much more expensive, in consequence of the larger quantity used, together with its quick-burning and small evaporating qualities. And I must point out that when we are compelled, as we are now-a-days, to use forced draught, the tubes have to be smaller, and, therefore, clog more quickly. These are very good reasons why we prefer Welsh to Scotch coal. But there is still another good reason. British men-of-war should always be ready for any emergency at a moment's notice, and it would not be possible for them to be so if we allowed Scotch coal to be used. Personally, I object to having any Scotch coal at all on board a man-of-war; but there is a Board of Admiralty, and they have declared that there may be 250 tons of Scotch coal allowed on board a man-of-war lying in a Scotch port as a First Reserve Ship; this Scotch coal would be used for culinary and other purposes. They have said, however, that not more than that amount can be taken on board, because they can get 300 tons of Welsh coal to a cargo. Though we put 300 tons on board at 13*s.* 6*d.* a-ton, we consider that cheaper to the country and better than if we put on board Scotch coal, even if we could get it for 3*s.* a-ton. The hon. Member referred to another point relating to the question of contracts. The Director of Contracts, as a matter of fact, is not half as almighty as the hon. Member seems to suppose. There is an appeal from the Director of Contracts, and any man who tenders can appeal to the Superintendent Lord, whatever the article he is tendering for. I do not think that the hon. Gentleman mentioned anything else; but I should like to say one or two words in reference to what the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) said. First of all, there is the question of laying down iron-clads. The right hon. Gentleman has pressed us before upon that point, but it would be a dangerous thing if the country were to think that any Board of Admiralty was not going to lay down iron-clads. My own opinion is that we are at least five iron-clads short of the number we ought to have in order to be thoroughly efficient, but the fact is that we have only a certain amount of money voted for the Navy, and we are obliged to do the best we can with it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The noble and gallant Lord might have made these observations at an earlier period, but the item now under discussion is a specific one—namely, the charge for coal. Therefore the noble and gallant Lord's observations are out of Order.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I am very sorry to hear that, Mr. Courtney. At some other time, however, I shall be able to go into these matters.

MR. MASON: With regard to the strength of Scotch coal, I have not the statistics with me at the present moment, but I am in a position to say, from my knowledge of this subject, that Scotch coal is stronger than Welsh coal as far as steam-raising power is concerned. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, I suppose the Board of Admiralty form their opinion of Scotch coal from having had a lot of trash sent up to them for testing. As I said before there is Scotch coal and Scotch coal—["hear, hear!"]—yes, of course there is, and if you get a bad sample of Scotch coal and compare it with a good sample of Welsh coal you will of course find a difference in favour of the Welsh coal. But I would remind the noble and gallant Lord that in the case of Scotch steamers which go from the Forth to Hamburg there is an acknowledged absence of smoke, as compared with those from Newcastle. In fact those steamers are known by their smokelessness. Does the noble and gallant Lord not think that such lines as the Anchor Line know exactly what they are about? Does he think that they would burden themselves with coal which was unfit for the service? Does he think that they would use such coal if it had the defects attributed to it by the noble and gallant Lord? The Anchor Line, I would inform him, coal not on the Mersey, but on the Clyde.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I feel bound to say something on this subject, because my constituents probably export more Scotch coal than those of any other district to the Continent. This I will say in defence of Scotch coal, that foreigners come in crowds to buy it. They come to a new port which has only lately been opened, and they are quite satisfied with the coal they get there. Of course these people can choose their own price, but they find that it pays them to come for Scotch coal. If that is the case, I do not think it can be so very bad after all.

SIR EDWARD REED: On behalf of Cardiff, I may say with perfect distinctness that if there is any question affecting the administration at the Admiralty, which has been over and over again discussed and which has been finally decided by experiment, it is this question of the quality of the different descriptions of coal. I really feel very strongly on behalf of my constituents in this matter; but I think it is unnecessary to go further than to appeal to the official experience which abounds in the Department.

COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince): I am not a Scotchman, but I must say that there is nothing that requires more carefully checking than the manner in which coal is tested for public Departments.

MR. MASON: I do not wish to divide the Committee on this matter, and therefore I will withdraw the Motion; but I trust that the remarks that I have made will not be without effect. Otherwise there will be great dissatisfaction felt in Scotland.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*

Original Question again proposed.

SIR JOHN PULESTON (Devonport): I desire to draw the attention of the Committee to one item in this Vote—namely, that relating to the sale of useless stores. It is a considerable sum—amounting to nearly £55,000, and I hope my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) will give us some information upon the point. A great deal has been said on more than one occasion upon this question of selling off stores and about the Government having to replace them in times of emergency at enormous cost. I am sure that is not the case at the present moment; but still the presence on the Estimates of so large an item for unserviceable stores calls attention to the fact that stores must have been purchased without much judgment, or to the fact that they have ceased, for some reason or other, to be useful. At all events, it is a question upon which we should like some information. I do not wish to occupy the time of the Committee any longer, but I venture to hope that information will be given to us on the subject.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD) (Lancashire, Ormskirk): The item put down here is £55,000, and I can assure my hon. Friend the Member for Devonport that this question of the sale of unserviceable stores is looked at exceedingly carefully, and that by far the bulk of the item is for the sale of worn-out stores and not of stores which have become obsolete without being used. There is comparatively a small amount of stores which, having been acquired in times gone by, have become obsolete, and therefore have to be cleared out. The great proportion of this sum is for the sale of returned stores from ships not worth repairing.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I wish in Section 1 of this Vote to call attention to a very important subject—that is to say, what seems to me the strange and improper way in which this House has been treated in regard to the bargain which has been made with the Colonies on the subject of the Australian Squadron. The gist of what I complain of is this. According to the proceedings of the Colonial Conference, Vol. I., page 509, the first part of Article 9 says that the agreement shall become actually binding between the Imperial and the several Colonial Governments named as soon as the Colonial Legislatures shall have passed special appropriations on certain terms. The effect of that is, that as soon as the Colonies agree the agreement shall be binding both on them and on the Imperial Government.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Read the last clause.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: That beginning "in time of peace two ships?"

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: "The several Colonies shall undertake——"

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No. The part which says that the agreements are to be laid before Parliament.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I understand that the agreement is to be laid before Parliament; but when it is laid before us the hands of Parliament will be tied if the consent of the Colonial Governments has been obtained. I put a Question on this matter in the House the other day; and the reply was that the Colonists would feel themselves aggrieved if next Session Parliament were to undo anything done on the faith of this agreement. Of course, the Government will be bound to come to Parliament for the Vote; but, it would lead to great trouble, if, after formal arrangements of this kind have been made, Parliament refuses to vote the money. But, Sir, I see that the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty seems to suggest that I am getting out of Order. Perhaps it would save trouble if I said one or two words on the bargain in regard to the building of ships; but I do not wish to dwell upon that point. What I complain of is that, by the bargain we have entered into, we are bound to maintain the present Australian Squadron in future, at our own expense, whether we like it or not. That is the part of the bargain which I most dislike being made without reference to Parliament. It binds this country hand and foot without any reference to Parliament. I conceive that to enter into a compact of that kind is not to treat Parliament properly. You should not enter into an agreement which is to be sanctioned by the Colonial Legislatures without coming at the same time to this Parliament and asking its sanction. Why, in these days, when there is so much difficulty in getting Acts through Parliament, Her Majesty's Government seem to think that Members of Parliament are slaves bound to the chariot-wheels of the Conservative Party, and that they can do what they like without coming to this House and consulting the Representatives of the people if they only get the consent of the Colonial Legislatures. The bargain in part may be a good one, Sir; but my contention is that it should not have been entered into without putting this Parliament in the same position as the Colonial Parliaments, and giving them the power to decide whether or not the bargain should hold good. I do not wish to dwell upon the merits of the agreement; but I do think that an agreement by which we are bound not only to maintain the new ships in Australian waters partly at our own cost, but also to keep up the whole Squadron at our expense, is a bargain to which exception may be taken. Why I especially do not like it is for this reason—that it seems to me that over the distant parts of this Empire, over which the sun never sets, we have no control whatever. We are so much afraid of the Colonies that whenever we make a bargain the Colonists have their own views as to what the bargain should be, and they press it on us with pertinacity and force, with the inevitable result that we give in. The Colonies always seem to get their own way in the end. The original draft of the agreement drawn up by Her Majesty's Government was one in regard to which I should not have had very much objection; but, at the instance of the Colonial Representatives at the Colonial Conference, it was altered to a form to which I do very much object. The first part of Article 5 was to the effect that, in consequence of the agreement for a joint individual force, no reduction should take place in the normal strength of Her Majesty's Naval Force employed on the Australian station, exclusive of the——

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: As a question of Order, I wish to ask, Sir, whether a point of this kind can be raised on this Vote? This is Vote 10, Section 1, the object of which is to provide stores for the Dockyards and for the repair of Her Majesty's ships. I desire to ask whether it is competent on a Vote like this to discuss proceedings which took place at the Colonial Conference, or to discuss what should be the collective strength of the Squadron of Her Majesty's Navy in different parts of the world?

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I have almost done.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that the hon. Member wishes to impeach certain negotiations which would bind this country to keep a certain naval force in the Australian seas. This Vote would in some way tend to keep up that force, and therefore I cannot say that the hon. Member is out of Order.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: As I say, I have almost done. I have referred to the part of the agreement, to which, I say, I do not think exception could be taken, but it is to the agreements as altered in the Conference that I object. What I have just stated to be the effect of part of the draft might be fair enough, but when we come to the agreement actually made we find the words "in consequence of the creation of a joint naval force no reduction shall take place" struck out, and we find these words inserted in their place, "notwithstanding the establishment of this joint naval force no reduction shall take place." The words "in consequence" might be all very fair, but by the new words we are bound not to reduce the old force under any circumstances. I do not like the alteration. I beg to move to reduce the Vote by £500 on account of the other point I mentioned.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,202,000, be granted for the said Services."—(*Sir George Campbell.*)

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: As the hon. Member has thought fit to make certain observations with regard to the strength of Her Majesty's Navy in Australian waters, it is perhaps only right that I should say a word or two respecting what has occurred. The hon. Member objects to the arrangement which has been made on the ground that it it is an unfair bargain for the Mother Country. All I can say is that the Representatives of the Government had some difficulty at the Colonial Conference in inducing the Colonial delegates and the Colonial Legislatures to assent to some of the proposals we made. The delegates, in fact, thought that those proposals pressed a little hardly upon the Colonies. Now, what will be the result of the agreement to which the hon. Member has referred, assuming that this House assents to it?—and it is completely in the power of the House to reject it——

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: When?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Why, when the money is asked for. I say this in order to relieve the mind of the hon. Member—that Parliament can refuse to ratify the agreement when the money which will be required to carry it into effect is asked for. If the House assents to the agreement, what will be the result?—and that brings me to the merits of the agreement. Those merits, I think, cannot be gainsaid. It is very essential in these times that we should maintain in Australian waters a peace establishment which shall be capable of developing automatically into a war establishment at very short notice. By this agreement we shall have a squadron in addition to our own squadron in Australian waters, and five per cent will be paid us on the original cost of construction. Our Australian and Colonial trade generally is rapidly increasing, and England and Australia have a common interest in protecting that trade. We have now, for the first time, entered into partnership for its protection. I shall never forget the farewell observations one of the delegates addressed to me. "I am glad," he said, "that the Mother Country has not pressed us too hardly now. We are not so many now. We only number 4,000,000, but a few years hence we may number 50,000,000, and the Colony will never forget the generous way in which the Mother Country has treated us."

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I did not criticize that part of the arrangement which the noble Lord refers to. I do not dispute that that part of the bargain may be very good, but it is clear that the squadron we are to provide for Australian waters will not be wholly maintained by the Australian Government, but that we pay for it jointly. It must be borne in mind that we protect Australian trade in this quarter of the globe, and I think it is only fair that the Australians should protect it themselves on the other side. However, I do not object to the agreement, but I object to the form of agreement by which we are bound to maintain the old squadron in Australian waters whether we like it or not. I beg to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

DR. TANNER (Cork, Co., Mid): I rise for the purpose of calling attention to a certain state of affairs existing in the port of Queenstown, in connection with the coaling item. I see here that £285,000 is paid for the provision of stores. If the Government provide stores in that extravagant way, I think they should avail themselves of the opportunity of placing them in those spots in Ireland as well as elsewhere where they are likely to be wanted. It is not so very long since—I believe it is only three or four years ago—that the Admiralty came to the conclusion that Haulbowline should be fitted up for the storage of a sufficient quantity of coal for the use of Her Majesty's ships which might come there for it. But what has happened? There is another point I shall call attention to later on respecting the coaling quarters; but now I wish to deal with the coal itself. What happened? In consequence of the Admiralty not taking advantage of the facilities placed at their disposal, in consequence of their not buying a sufficient quantity of coal and storing it at Haulbowline, what occurred? Why, some ships of the flying squadron came into Queenstown and there was no coal for them. Of course, they wanted coal, and the Commander gave orders for coal to be purchased of the local dealers. Well, for my own part, I do not object to the Admiralty spending their money at Queenstown, or elsewhere in the South of Ireland—on the contrary, I am very glad that they should do so—but, as a Member of this House, and as one whose duty it is to look into these Estimates and to endeavour to reduce the charge upon the taxpayers, I say that in this matter the Government have been notably lax. I can only call attention to one case of the kind; but I dare say that if these matters were looked into we should find that probably faults of a similar kind might be shown up in connection with many of the coaling stations. Practically speaking, the Admiralty officials do not purchase their coals in a cheap market, and do not store it up and look out for a rainy day. I felt it to be my duty to call attention to this fact. There are two or three other points under this Vote that I would just merely call attention to. There is, for instance, the question of the manufacture of jute and hemp, which is carried on very largely on the Eastern coast of Scotland. The Government have always neglected to make use of the opportunities which are afforded to them by these large manufactories in Scotland, and have given contracts and bought materials very largely—a great deal more extensively than they ought to do in times like the present — from abroad. They have brought into this country a large quantity of material of Russian and Indian manufacture, and have done this to the detriment of the Scottish producer. I speak on this question, of course, as an Irishman—but as an Irishman who knows how kind our Scottish Friends always are to us in this House. I undertook last year to speak about the question; I did so; and the First Lord of the Admiralty promised to devote a certain amount of "favourable consideration" to the matter. But, however, that resolution, like all those other good resolutions which the Admiralty Office is paved with, unfortunately fell to the ground. Then there is another point to which I would draw attention, and that is with regard to the manufacture of electric torpedoes and the acceptance of patents. I think there is a good deal too much favouritism in connection with this Department. It is not so very long since that a poor man who happened to be a master mariner, of the name of Atkins, invented a torpedo, and brought the invention before the Lords of the Admiralty. Well, after examining it in a superficial manner, the Admiralty snubbed him and sent him to the right-about. I understand that within a very short time since then—within the last couple of weeks—this poor man has got an offer from some foreign Government for his invention. He would have been only too glad to have given the invention to the Government of this country, if the Admiralty had approved of it. There is, as I say, altogether too much favouritism in connection with this Department. When inventions are made by aristocrats and not by the sons of the people, or when they are made by both, the aristocrats get the preference. I maintain that this is not fair; and I certainly ask that the invention of this poor man, this Captain Atkins, should at any rate be inquired into, and that, if it is of use, it should be brought before the proper authorities. It was, as a matter of fact, simply brought before the noble Lord the Member for one of the Divisions of London. It was brought before the noble Lord, and he stated the belief that it was a very fair invention indeed. But, unfortunately, the noble Lord had too many important matters to occupy his attention just then, and I presume that he thought nothing more about it. At any rate, I now bring the case before this Committee. I think that a poor man, if he makes an invention, is just as much entitled to have it gone into as a rich man. There is another point, under Section 2, Sub-head N, about which I should like to say a word. I refer to the question of the reserve of merchant cruisers——

The CHAIRMAN: That does not come within Section 1.

Dr. TANNER: Very well, Sir. Then I hope that, at any rate, on the points to which I have referred, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will give us some indication of the policy the Government are going to pursue. First, in connection with the question of the storage of coal at Haulbowline, and then with regard to the jute manufacturers on the East Coast of Scotland. On this latter question I desire to urge the Government, when they possibly can do so, in times of adversity, trial and trouble like the present, when all trades are suffering, in Scotland as well as in England, to give a certain amount of preference to home manufacturers. I do not ask them to give an undue preference, or to go in for extravagance, but merely to give an honest preference to home manufacturers, especially in regard to such manufactures—especially in regard to such matters as I have called attention to. And, finally, I would urge the noble Lord to give us an answer upon this question of the invention of torpedoes.

Mr. NOLAN (Louth, N.): Before the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty or the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty rises I would ask them to be prepared to consider and answer a question which many people take an interest in. It has been stated, on good authority, that the Russian Navy is now using petroleum in preference to coal as fuel, and I should like to know if experiments have taken place in this country on the subject. I desire to know whether any specimens of petroleum have been used, and, if so, with what result; and, generally speaking, what is the view of the Admiralty with regard to the use of liquid fuel?

Mr. WOOTTON ISAACSON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): Upon this Vote, I should like to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty a question with regard to armour plates. The hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) has said that we should, as far as possible, give a preference to articles of home manufacture. Well, armour plates are things which only two firms in this country are capable of competing for, and the result is that we are obliged to pay 30*s.* a-ton more for these articles at home than we pay if we send our orders to foreign countries. I admit that it is a patriotic thing for the Government to obtain armour plates at home, and to show favouritism to home manufacturers; but I think that manufacturers should know that we cannot continue to give the whole of our orders to our own countrymen unless they show a larger spirit of enterprise, and lay down more extensive plant in order to compete more favourably with foreign nations. I trust that we shall have a very satisfactory answer on this point from the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood). I should be glad, of course, to see more jute of home manufacture consumed in the Navy.

Mr. FORWOOD: With regard to what has fallen from the hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) respecting the storage of coal at Haulbowline, I have to state that we keep there a stock of 1,800 tons of coal, which is quite sufficient, in times of peace, for the steamships which occasionally want coal in those waters. As to the hon. Member's remarks about the late manœuvres, and the ships being short of coal, I would point out that coal for vessels engaged in the manœuvres was sent out in colliers, the Admiral giving orders to these vessels to meet the war ships at points which he indicated. It is possible that there may have been some delay on the part of the Admiralty in regard to ordering some one of these colliers to meet the vessels to which the hon. Member has referred. However, I assure him that special arrangements were made as to coaling the vessels during the manœuvres. With regard to manufactures of jute, and giving Scotch manufacturers a preference over Indian manufacturers, I may tell the hon. Member that we have every desire to purchase our goods in the home markets—and when I say the home markets I do not for a moment mean to assume that the Indian market is not a home market. We have a strict record kept of the relative usefulness of goods supplied from time to time by different firms. We are obliged to have regard to the use to which the goods are put and to the quality of the material; and we should not be justified in paying a high price for goods when we can get the same material at a lower price.

Dr. TANNER: Is it not a fact that the Scotch goods are of a better quality, and altogether of a better class, than the Indian goods?

Mr. FORWOOD: I can assure the hon. Member that these points are taken into account. As regards the electric torpedoes, we are constantly receiving proposals from inventors, as the hon. Member is doubtless aware. Scarcely a week goes by but some inventor or other produces something new and important, and whenever Her Majesty's Government think that there is an invention which gives a reasonable promise of value it is referred to their professional advisers for them to inquire into. Of course, it is impossible for the Government to take up all inventions; but, at the same time, we endeavour to give adequate attention to all the proposals brought before us. With regard to the use of petroleum in Her Majesty's ships, that matter has been watched. No doubt petroleum is largely used in Russian ships as fuel; but the reason is not far to seek, because coal is comparatively dearer with them than it is with us. The use of petroleum has been for a long time in an experimental stage; but a great many people think that there is risk of explosion connected with it. Its use is not in that state of development which would justify private individuals, much less Her Majesty's Government, in having recourse to it. Then the hon. Member for the Stepney Division of the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Isaacson) made reference to the subject of the manufacture of armour plates. Unfortunately, there are only two firms in this country who manufacture armour plates, and no doubt they manage to adjust prices very cleverly between them. But we must remember that these firms have set up and maintain heavy and expensive plant for the manufacture of these 20-inch plates with three or four inches of steel on the face. The nature of the manufacture involves enormous expense, and these firms have to depend for their return very largely upon Government work. As has been pointed out, it is possible that the construction of armour-plated ships in the country may be for a time stationary. During that time the plant of these manufacturers will be comparatively idle. As to going abroad, there is grave objection to going to foreign countries for our armour plates, so long as we are treated with fairness at home. It is essential that, if we have only two firms who make them, we should give those firms inducements to keep their plant in order, so that they may be able to make plates in times of emergency. It would be ridiculous to be obliged in times of emergency to go abroad for armour-plates, because we might find ourselves shut out of the markets. I hope that, after these explanations, we may be allowed to take the Vote.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £1,911,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Machinery and Ships built by Contract, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888."

Captain COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I really regret having to occupy the time of the Committee at the end of the Session; and I should not do so were it not for the fact that the item of which I am about to move the reduction is an indication of an entirely new departure in our naval policy with regard to the Admiralty arrangements in connection with the Mercantile Marine. I think it is so important that —much against my own personal inclination—I feel bound to trouble the Committee with these observations. Now, Sir, this is the last item in Section 2 of Vote 10; and it is an item which I am going to propose to reduce by the sum of £10,000, the "subvention for the right of pre-emption or hire of merchant vessels as armed cruisers or transports." This being a new policy, it would be well to ask what was the policy it is supposed to replace, and what are the aims and objects of the new policy? Now, I will not trouble the Committee upon one point, because we are all agreed upon it—we are all agreed in recognizing the enormous dangers to which our Mercantile Marine is exposed in time of war, owing to the vast extent of our commerce; and we are also all agreed upon the fact that our Mercantile Marine constitutes an enormous reserve of naval power, and that the only question is as to its utilization. It is to the initiation of a new policy for the utilization of our Mercantile Marine that this Vote refers. Well, now, Sir, what existed before this new system? I do not think that there was any policy at all. There was an idea at the Admiralty about utilizing the Mercantile Marine; but the only practical step taken towards the realization of that object, which I have ever been aware of, was to lay down certain Admiralty conditions with regard to the structural qualities of the ships, whilst the only inducement offered to the shipowners to adopt these structural qualities was that these ships should be placed on the Admiralty List for priority of employment when the Admiralty were in a position to give it. Well, that was then the condition of things. After some years we had a small business in Egypt, and the Admiralty, following that policy, had to take up certain ships. They had to take up, and did take up, some 200, and at that very time they had on their list, as I make out, over 300 vessels, having an aggregate capacity of over 1,000,000 of tons. But, when the time came to apply that policy in obtaining transports, they did not apply it. A very large number of vessels on the Admiralty list were excluded by the Admiralty from acting as transports, and vessels were employed for that purpose which were not on the list at all. Thus the policy which had been adopted broke down when the time came to apply it. I think it is very important that we should be perfectly clear with regard to this item in the Vote. The words are—"For armed cruisers or transports," and I wish to be as distinct as possible with regard to those words. I will therefore first make a few observations with regard to transports, and then I shall come to the question of armed cruisers. Now, this £10,000 a-year is the beginning of an expenditure of which we cannot see the end, as I shall presently show from Admiralty evidence on the question. If we look at it as a means of providing transports, I think our experience will show that the policy must fail. Take the experience of the past few years. This £10,000 will secure us little more than two ships, and the right of employing them in time of war, at a previously fixed price. We are to pay the £10,000 a-year for reserving that right. But in the year 1883 the Admiralty hired three transports, and in 1884 they hired 26. In 1885, for a small expedition to Egypt, they hired as many as 150, and the whole cost was over £1,500,000. Now, it is quite evident that if, in carrying out a small expedition to Egypt, you require 150 transports, the number of vessels will swell enormously if you have to carry a larger force—say to Afghanistan—double the distance. Therefore, I cannot see that, in this matter of transports as a provision for war, the payment of £10,000 for a reserve of two ships will produce any result at all when it comes to the question of engaging a large number of transports. This policy will do one or other of two things, it will either utterly fail to provide us with efficient transports more than we have at present, or it will induce the Government to expand it to such exaggerated proportions as to form a very material proportion of the whole Naval Vote. We know by the Memorandum that it is proposed that this Vote at present shall not exceed £50,000, and that that will give us 10 ships. Well, I think that the right of pre-emption for the obtaining of transports is no way of grappling with the difficulty which even a small expedition requires us to face. I therefore will not say more than this—that the Subvention Vote cannot be said to be of any importance whatever as regards the item "Transports." Now, having cleared the ground, I come to the question simply of subvention, or the right of hiring merchant ships for cruisers. Now, here, again, let us look at our experience. In 1885, by a Vote of Credit, we suddenly took up 16 ships, which cost us £600,000 in a few weeks, or an average of £37,500 each. Now, what did we get for our money? Why, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty tells us in his Memorandum that many of these ships never left harbour, and that only one, the *Oregon*, was ever fully equipped. I think there was very long delay in doing that; but there is one thing we are not told, either under the old system or under the new, and it is very material to the question—namely, how and where are you going to employ these ships? Are they to act as part of the Fleet of the Royal Navy; are they to have a roving commission; or in what way, when you have taken them, are you going to use them? We do not know. All that we know with regard to these 16 ships is that the Admiralty took them up at a cost of over £500,000, and it is not clear what they intended to do with them. It seems certain that they did nothing at all with them. Well, now, that is the result of our experience. Now let me say a word as to the question of cost. The subvention, as stated in the Admiralty Letter to the Treasury, or rather the stipulated subvention to be paid for each vessel in peace, as stated in the Letter of the Admiralty to the Treasury, is £5,000 a-year. Now, I have said that in taking up 16 vessels under the old system, they cost us for fitting, taking up, and discharging when done with £37,500 each. Now, if you are going to pay £5,000 a-year per vessel in time of peace for the right of pre-emption or hiring vessels in war time, if you have no war for seven and a-half years you will have paid at the end of that time as much as you did under the old system. Whereas under the old system at the date of the discharge of the vessels it had cost you £37,500, under the new system, having paid this much during seven and a-half years, you would commence to pay for the hire of the vessel afresh. Each vessel would start with a debt of £37,500 before we began to pay for actual services. I think that it is a financial matter requiring some considerable consideration. I think that if you have 10 vessels, for which you pay £5,000 a-piece per year for the right of pre-emption or hire in the event of emergency, you must remember that it adds £500,000 every five years to your Naval Expenditure. Now, the next point I wish to refer to is one upon which I am not at all clear, and is, therefore, one which I trust the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will enlighten the Committee upon. It is not at all clear that the Admiralty took these 16 vessels in 1885 because they wanted them as armed cruisers, or thought they wanted them as armed cruisers. I think I shall show that they took them up for a wholly different reason. We see in the Admiralty Letter to the Treasury of the 7th of February of this year that the Admiralty asked for the approval of the Treasury to a principle of subvention. They alluded, as a reason for the subvention, to the circumstances of 1885, and they told the Treasury that it was not so much a want of armed cruisers which made them bring forward the subject as the necessity of preventing these vessels falling into the hands of a foreign Government. They say—

> "It will be remembered that in 1885 a sum approximating to £600,000 was expended on retaining the services of certain fast steamers so as to prevent their being available for the service of any Power inimical to the interests of the United Kingdom."

Therefore we must regard the Subvention Vote from the point of view of preventing the transfer of vessels to foreign Powers, to be used against us under a foreign flag on the outbreak of war. Now, I think that that is a matter which requires clear examination. Let us look at it by the light of events in taking up these 16 cruisers in 1885. Not one half of these vessels had a seagoing speed of 16 knots. There were only five of them, so far as I can make out, that had, and would have been qualified for subvention under the new policy; therefore, supposing this new policy you now inaugurate by this Vote to have been in existence then, what would have been the effect? It would not have diminished the necessity for preventing all the other vessels of less than 16 knots being transferred to a foreign flag. You would have paid for five in time of peace, but 11 others you would not have paid the subvention for, with the result that you would have had to pay all the same, not because you wanted armed cruisers, but because you could not allow them to fall into the hands of a foreign Power—out of the £600,000 you would have had to pay for 11 vessels £37,500 each just the same, not for use as armed cruisers, but because you were afraid of their falling into the hands of foreign Powers. Now, I for one do not believe that this fiddling with four or five ships, or even 10 ships, and paying so much a-year in the Naval Estimates is a proper way of grappling with the serious question of the transfer of the best of our mercantile steam ships to a foreign flag in case of war, and it is because I think you are delaying the facing of this question by temporizing with this small Vote that I object to it. You might say what pains and penalties can you put upon the shipowners who transfer their vessels to foreign Powers with whom we are on the brink of being at war. Are the interests of our country to be prejudiced by our own shipowners and shipbuilders assisting our enemies? I think if we cannot trust the patriotism of our countrymen we can, at any rate, meet the danger by another application of subventions, or by legislation to prevent vessels from falling into the hands of other Powers. I am sorry to detain the Committee so long, but really this matter is a very important one. What are the aims and objects of the development of this new policy with which we start in this Vote? I think they are stated in the Admiralty Letter to the Treasury, where it is said that we are in a very dangerous position. And there is another reason they have for pressing the Treasury to agree to the system of subventions. In the Letter to which I refer they say—

> "The retention of a fleet of Royal Naval Reserve cruisers must be obviously of great national advantage. In a pecuniary sense they would serve to limit the necessity felt by their Lordships for the construction of fast war vessels to protect the commerce of this country."

Subventions therefore are to be regarded as opening a back door for future Admiralties to escape from the responsibility of creating an adequate force of war cruisers. Now I have the greatest confidence in the present Board of Admiralty. If it were permanent I should not be in the least afraid in this matter; but I confess, looking at what our experience has been of past Admiralties, and in view of their willingness to bring down to the level of a cry for a reduction of expenditure on our naval power, I fear this proposal really imperils the safety of the country—I am not prepared to say that future Admiralties, largely adopting the view of the statement I have just read, would not bring the country to a condition of danger. Therefore, I say that the Subvention Vote being put forward on the ground that it will save building more cruisers is a dangerous policy, and it is one which I protest against. Are we asked to adopt this policy of subvention in order to avoid our responsibilities with regard to the construction of more cruisers, and having made this arrangement with the owners of the mercantile vessels, are we to go on year after year allowing a deficiency in our armament, so far as fast cruisers are concerned, to continue? The next point is one which I think again arises in the Memorandum, and I must openly tell the noble Lord and the Board of Admiralty that I should have had more faith or belief in the policy of subventions if they had not given so many different reasons in support of it. Here is another reason given to us in the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty's Memorandum accompanying the Estimates. He says "unless some inducement is given to English Companies the building of fast steamers in this country must diminish, whereas abroad their building is encouraged by subsidies." Then he goes on to say, most properly, that "it is neither to the credit of the country nor for the advantage of our marine that fast steamers should be mostly under foreign flags." Well, I am sure that everyone will endorse the view of the noble Lord and the Admiralty in that matter. I think there is growing up a feeling in this country, as knowledge is increasing, that our Mercantile Marine is not safe in the face of this foreign bounty system. There is a tendency to produce under foreign flags better lines of steamers even than some of our own. Foreign countries are building steamers much better than some of our own, and this is in consequence of the foreign bounty system. The noble Lord himself is my witness in the words I have just quoted. But I ask the Committee if the policy of foreign countries is really lowering our power to be the first and foremost in the world at sea in the power and speed and class of our ships—if foreign policy is doing that, is it to be thought that this Vote is sufficient to grapple with the question? I say no. This is not a question for the Admiralty Board, but for the Government as a Government to face—they must meet the action of foreign countries in this matter in a statesman-like way, and the people of this country will support them. We cannot afford to have our Mercantile Marine lowered in its capacity and character. I hold that we cannot in safety to our interests in peace, and that we cannot with safety to our Empire in war, allow the superiority of our Mercantile Marine at sea to be diminished. Now, bounties in foreign countries tend to diminish our power, and I say this country ought to face the matter boldly at once, and not by Votes like this in the Navy Estimates. I believe an easy way to do it would be to put 1*d.* a-ton on foreign ships entering and clearing British ports, which would bring us in about £120,000 a-year. That is a question I am not going to pursue on this Vote, as it would be out of Order, but I merely wish to bring out that I object to the subvention being placed on this ground as a way to meet foreign bounties. I think it is fiddling with the question and doing harm to the Navy and everyone concerned in this country. But there is another matter to which I should like to allude, and that is the limitation to which this policy is to be subjected. I find in the Subvention Papers the view of the Admiralty. They say "their Lordships have not expressed a definite view as to the number of vessels which should be retained; but as such steamers are not likely to be constructed in any considerable numbers, it is thought that probably 10 would be the maximum number likely to be placed at the disposition of the Admiralty within the next five years." Now, the Admiralty have not in their own minds any definite limit to this power. I say that for the present Admiralty to establish this policy, and then to go out and leave another Admiralty in power without a limitation would be a very dangerous proceeding. I think it is extremely dangerous that even the existing Board of Admiralty should tell the Treasury that they have no definite view as to the number of vessels that should be retained, but the amount is to be charged on the Estimates, and the number of vessels is not to be decided by sea strategy What policy then are you going to pursue? The question does not seem to be—you shall take as many ships as you want, but the number shall depend upon what shipowners and shipbuilders choose, and that is another ground of my objection. I am just about to conclude, but I cannot sit down without bringing to the ears of the noble Lord one or two matters which I should like him to hear with regard to the utilization of the Mercantile Marine, especially with regard to these subventions. What is the practical result of this proposal as it bears on the utilization of our Mercantile Marine? Practically, the result is this—that you are to make arrangements during peace time, by which, at the outbreak of war, you will rob our main lines of communication of their very best ships. If you are not going to take these vessels off our lines, you need not pay for them. The reason it is found so expensive to obtain the services of these ships by subvention, is because you propose to take them from these lines, and that you have to put the lines to inconvenience to supply their places. You have to compensate them for this inconvenience and possible losses. You have to pay a heavy annual charge in peace for these ships to supplement our naval forces in time of war, and the consequence is that we shall have to put our commerce into slower vessels. To illustrate that, I would point out that we had recently announced to us that the Admiralty have agreed to give a subvention to the three best ships, two not yet built, of the Peninsular and Oriental Line, and that will cost us about £15,000 every year. We are to pay that in peace for the right of taking these ships off the Peninsular and Oriental Line when war occurs. As hon. Members know, the Peninsular and Oriental ships are on the main line to India and the East, and by taking these ships off that line, you will force all the commerce which these ships would otherwise carry with safety, owing to their speed, into slower vessels. I do not know whether our Colonies are parties to the sub-vention, but they are parties to the agreement under the Peninsular and Oriental contract. The understanding we have with the Colonies, and for which the Colonies pay, is that their mails shall run regularly under certain conditions. That is all very well in time of peace, but the moment war breaks out, you are going to break faith with the Colonies in that respect, and I think that in this matter there is a very grave danger. Further than this, you are going to subsidize these three fast ships so that you may have them at a certain rate when war breaks out, but when war does come the Suez Canal may be blocked, and to get to the Australian Colonies and to India, you may have to run around the Cape. When you have this long sea journey to face, that will be the very time when these three fast ships will be most wanted on their lines. If your mails have to be run around the Cape in time of war, that will be precisely the time when you will be in need of rapid vessels. Your mail service with the Colonies and with India will be in jeopardy just in proportion as the vessels which carry the mails are slow. Your policy, therefore, will have the effect of increasing the danger to our Mercantile Marine on the Indian and Eastern line. How are you going to prevent it? Are you going to take three vessels off the line, and send them say, to the Pacific or somewhere else, and then detach vessels of the Royal Navy to protect the Peninsular and Oriental steamers because they are all slow vessels, you yourselves at the Admiralty having taken all the fast ones? It certainly seems to me that this matter has not been thoroughly thought out. What did you do in the old wars in the matter of this line of Indian communication? What was the old East Indiaman? Why, it was a man-of-war. Every East Indiaman was an armed merchantman. Were they not vessels that ran on their lines in spite of the teeth of foreign nations; and did they not keep up communication with the East almost altogether independent of the Royal Navy? According to the system you are now adopting, in those days the Government would have given subventions to these Indiamen; so that when war broke out those armed vessels would have been sent somewhere else, and the trade to the East would have been obliged to depend for safety upon Her Majesty's ships. I think the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty will see the point of my observations in this respect at once. Were these three fast Peninsular and Oriental steamers left on the Indian line, the Peninsular and Oriental line will not require that subvention of £15,000 a-year. All they would want would be fittings and other similar arrangements, and a small annual payment; but they would not require this large subsidy—they would not require this large amount of money to be paid for them. Why, if they are armed and are left upon this line, what will they do? They will do the very thing you want—that is to say, patrol the line, and protect *en route* the line on which the slower ships which are performing the same journey. That is what they will do, and therefore I object to this subvention for taking them off their line as a matter of policy. Now, Sir, I imagine that with all this talk about the safety of the Mercantile Marine the matter has not been adequately grappled with. The Admiralty, I should say, are adhering too closely to the precedents set by previous Admiralties, and have not sufficiently thought out this question. If you are going to have subventions at all to merchant vessels, I maintain that the best policy would be to act upon the principle, not of taking these ships off the line, but of making the lines themselves independent of the protection of the Royal Navy, as far as possible. Where we should devote our attention to making our commerce as secure as possible by self-protection from attack are those places where the commerce at present is not sufficient to maintain that class of vessel adapted to the purpose, and which you are anxious to secure by your subsidy. You have now five great routes to maintain, the route by the Mediterranean to the East, the route by the Cape, the route to the West Indies, the route by Cape Horn, and the route to North America. Every one of these lines has at this moment the fastest and best steamers patrolling almost every hour, going from port to port throughout the British Empire. You can arm these vessels, and if you are prepared to arm them you need not pay a heavy subvention to them in order to take them off the line. Your policy ought to be, not to remove them, but to arm them and keep them where they now are; but where you want to take measures to guard the ordinary mercantile marine is in the Pacific, and, to my mind, this proposed £50,000 a-year would be much better applied in establishing a connection between Australia and Western Canada and between Western Canada and the East, including Hong Kong. In this way, also, you would be protecting the trade with Hong Kong. If you went to war to-morrow your subvention would apply to a few vessels on this side of the globe; but you would have no such ships in the Pacific, and yet it would be there that your danger would be greatest. You are making no adequate arrangement for its self-defence at all. I beg to move that this sum be reduced by the sum of £10,000, and I trust that, at all events, this will occur —namely, that the matter will be more carefully examined, and that the Government will not pledge themselves to a policy which will lead them they do not know where, and which, from the point of view that I have adopted, is, I am convinced, defective in every respect.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item N—Royal Reserve of Merchant Cruisers,—be reduced by the sum of £10,000."—(*Captain Colomb.*)

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD) (Lancashire, Ormskirk): The hon. and gallant Gentleman has said that this is a new departure on the part of the Board of Admiralty, and he has very ably criticized it. I will endeavour to explain what are the objects of the Admiralty in initiating this new departure, and while doing so, I hope also to reply to the remarks of my hon. and gallant Friend. Though it is a new departure on the part of the Admiralty, this question of subvention to merchant vessels for use as armed cruisers in time of war is no new idea. It is an old idea; but a practical effect has never been given to it until the time of the present Board of Admiralty, although it has been favourably considered by previous Boards. At the outset, I may say that there is perfect unanimity on the part of the Board of Admiralty, including the Naval Members, as well as on the part of those Members having seats in this House upon this question. No doubt, what brought the scheme more prominently before our minds was what occurred in 1885. We all remember the great anxiety expressed in that year as to the disposition of the fast steamers of the British Mercantile Marine which were conducting our commercial operations in all parts of the world. There was no doubt great hurry on the part of the Admiralty to secure those vessels lest they should fall into the hands of foreign nations who might be inimical to us. My hon. and gallant Friend (Captain Colomb) has stated that this plan of the Admiralty is not the best plan to prevent such vessels from coming into the hands of foreign owners, and he hinted that there might be some law necessary to prevent vessels being transferred to hostile powers in times of emergency. I would point out to my hon. and gallant Friend that when times of emergency arrive, and there is an actual outbreak of hostilities, it would be difficult to pass any law which would operate only on the outbreak of hostilities. There are many owners who, though thoroughly patriotic men, might desire on the outbreak of a war, or if such a thing as hostilities were impending, to get rid of a number of their ships, and they might sell, not to a hostile power, but to shipowners belonging to a neutral nation, under the idea that they were placing these ships under a neutral flag, when, as a matter of fact, the vessels might be re-sold by the neutral shipowners to our enemies. Therefore, I do not think that any Act of Parliament which my hon. and gallant Friend could suggest would enable us successfully to guard against a transfer of ships into hostile hands. The Government think the agreement which they have entered into with the owners of these vessels will place them absolutely at our disposal. My hon. and gallant Friend has stated the amount of money paid for vessels in 1885, the actual sum the Government undertook to pay the owners was £534,000 for the hire of the steamships, but as the contingency was shorter than was expected, some of the vessels hired were discharged by a compromise before six months was up, and only a sum of £444,000 was paid. To secure these vessels at that time the Government had to undertake to pay them six months' hire, whether they were wanted or not. Under the agreement which we have made with the owners of of vessels, we are under no obligation whatever as to the length of time for which we are to take the vessels should emergency arise. We shall only take them for such time as may be suitable. There is another point I should like to dwell on, and it is this, that though we did pay something approaching £600,000 in connection with these merchant cruisers, that figure does not represent the cost to the nation in consequence of the anxiety which prevailed at that time, and the alarm which spread through the mercantile community at the injury which would result to us from active hostilities, partly from the fear of fast armed merchant cruisers. I can speak from personal knowledge that very large war premiums were paid on British commerce then traversing over the seas. It is difficult to establish the precise outlay we were put to when we took over that large number of vessels which were not then fitted for the purpose for which they were required. By the proposed subvention, however, we shall obtain vessels which are fitted with gun platforms, and in which other provision has been made so that when guns are put on board they will be ready for service almost immediately—certainly within a week after the outbreak of hostilities. To give an illustration of the disadvantage of the old system, I may point out that we only had one ship which we took over completely fitted, and yet a long period elapsed—I think 42 days—from the time of our taking over the ship to when she was completely fitted with her armaments, and ready for service. It is needless to point out what danger might arise in the event of a pressing emergency if we had to wait for so long a time before we could get our fast cruisers fit for service. The greatest consideration which we shall have to bear in mind in the event of any future war will be the necessity of our being prepared to strike the first blow, and to be able to afford efficient protection to our commerce almost at a moment's notice, from whichever quarter of the world it may be threatened. The greatest amount of damage which we should sustain would be that occurring during the first month after the breaking out of hostilities. It is impossible to estimate what that damage would be, and to discuss in a niggardly spirit the question of this small amount of money payable year by year as an insurance against that risk is scarcely worthy of this House of Commons. We have only to regard the extent of British commerce, and to compare it with the commerce of the rest of the world, to appreciate the importance of this subject. It should always be borne in mind that British merchant shipping is 1,000,000 tons in excess of the tonnage of all the other nations of the globe put together. The question is how we are to meet this first great pressure. In the first place, it is far from the thoughts of the Board of Admiralty that these subsidized vessels will take the place of our naval cruisers. They are to supplement them. Of course we should make our cruisers and our line of battle ships our first line of defence, but they at the beginning of a war would undoubtedly have their attention largely engaged in watching the enemy's war cruisers. There will be a risk of suffering severe injury from marauding vessels, and the enemy's extemporized cruisers. They will have to be looked after, and in order to effectively took after them it is essential that we should have the best and fastest ships procurable in the world. No one suggests for a moment that our armed merchant cruisers could at all cope in a pitched battle with an armoured ship of war, but we do say this, that even a fast merchant cruiser, provided that care is taken to select those of the highest speed, can be made extremely valuable as a scout for a fleet to keep touch with the enemy, to harass the enemy, and to give timely warning of the appearance of an enemy to our own vessels. The more important object of fast merchant cruisers will be to watch our trade routes, and to help us to establish protection for them. If we have a sufficient number of vessels for this purpose, and which are known to be on certain stations, they will be a great element of safety. Our Mercantile Marine will be able to traverse their routes with some degree of comfort and safety, knowing that there are fast cruisers watching the routes and keeping in touch one with the other over great tracts of ocean. For all these purposes speed and coal endurance are the two main elements, and our object has been to exercise the utmost care in selecting vessels to have regard to these two points. And another desirable point is that we should have vessels at our disposition in different parts of the world at once available for guns. For instance, a vessel of the Peninsular and Oriental Line may be in China, may be in the Suez Canal, or be at Malta, or many other places when war breaks out, whilst other vessels may be in Australia, and others in North America. We shall have ready for these vessels at different points armaments in order to protect our routes long before cruisers could be sent out from this country. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has spoken about vessels taken up on the last occasion as armed cruisers, and he has spoken with reference to the question of transport, and also with reference to the question of speed. It is this question of speed which I wish the Committee to have foremost in its mind, because, after all, speed is the great thing that we have to consider. Now, those unacquainted with the cost of obtaining speed in large steamships are very apt to speak casually about ships and their speed of 14, 15, or 16 knots an hour as if there was very little difference amongst them. There is nothing more delusive than the loose way in which people talk on this subject. I cannot better illustrate my point in this respect than in giving the House one or two figures as to what speed means and what it costs. An armoured vessel of 10,000 tons steaming 12 knots an hour will probably require 2,500 horse power to propel it. Raise the speed up to 16 knots, and you require 8,500 horse power, and if you want to get one knot more, or 17 knots, that 8,500 horse power becomes 12,500. Or take another class of vessel—the lighter class of vessel calculated to steam up to 22 knots. In order to obtain 18 knots an hour you will require 7,000 horse power, to steam 20 knots 10,000 horse power; but to increase that 20 to 22 knots your power must be raised from 10,000 horse to 19,000 horse power. I quote these figures to indicate to the Committee that there is an immense difference between vessels commonly spoken of as 14 knots and the maximum speed of vessels of the class we have engaged. The Government have taken no vessels under the contract they have made with steam shipowners of less speed than 16 knots, and in taking these vessels it must be borne in mind that we have the advantage of having control over other vessels of the same fleet without charge. These vessels, it is true, may be only suitable for transport, but there is no doubt that in time of war the rate for the hire of transports runs up very much, and if you can secure a fixed rate in time of peace, it is much more prudent to make the bargain than to put it off until the outbreak of war. I do not claim that the rate of hire is unusually low by reason of the annual subvention. We have paid for the vessels probably the ordinary market value; but looking at the vessels we have obtained—looking at the high speed of these vessels, and the cost of that speed, I think we are paying a very reasonable price for the ships. We have by these contracts determined the rates of hire, and the rates of purchase if we decide to buy the vessels. The vessels will be fitted with gun platforms; the gun carriages and guns are stored where the ships usually come to be fitted; and in regard to most of the vessels we have a provision that a part of the crew shall be composed of Naval Reserve men. That is an important point. We are spending a large sum of money annually on our Naval Reserve, and I look upon these vessels as Naval Reserve ships in full training. Then I come to the question of pounds, shillings, and pence. After all pounds, shillings, and pence is a very considerable element, and I must say it forms a point of view from which I have looked at this subject. The sum for which we obtain 10 ships in all of the high speed will be £50,000 per annum —and I beg to say that my hon. and gallant Friend has placed too high a figure upon the number of these ships which are likely to be built. Taking the number 10, I am, perhaps, taking the present maximum number of vessels of this rate of speed which our shipowners are likely to produce. I do not mean to say that these 10 vessels will form a proper substitute for 10 cruisers; but the House may be able to form some estimate of the comparative cost of the 10 vessels which will always be under our finger and thumb, and always ready for service at our call. 10 Naval cruisers of the high speed to which I refer would cost something like £1,500,000. To maintain them would cost in men, victuals, coals, and repairs, £150,000 annually. The interest on money invested is worth, at any rate, 8 per cent per annum, and we know that our war ships depreciate at the rate of at least 6 per cent per annum. Interest and depreciation must be added to the £150,000, which brings the cost of these 10 cruisers of high speed for the protection of our commerce against extemporized war vessels of the enemy up to something like £285,000 a-year, and that would be an expenditure going on from year to year. Against that expenditure the subvention to 10 merchant cruisers, the use of which we can avail ourselves of whenever we want them, is only something like £50,000 per annum. It therefore appears to me that we have effected what I may call a considerable saving by the proposed arrangement. We save £235,000 a-year; and, putting the matter on a commercial basis, we are considerable gainers by the arrangements made for the hire of these vessels. The hon. and gallant Gentleman has ridiculed the idea of our influencing the type of ships by our subvention. He seems to think that the efficacy of our Mercantile Marine ought not to be kept up by a system of this kind, and that subventions will have very little influence on the manner in which ships will be built. In reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I would call his attention to this fact that we have by this subvention induced one of the larger lines trading with New York—namely, the White Star Line, to lay down two vessels of a different type and character to what they would have laid down had it not been for this subvention. They have undertaken instead of building ordinary merchant ships, with machinery and boilers exposed to the enemy's shot and shell, to build two vessels of a type approved by our naval constructors. These ships will have engines, boilers, and steering apparatus below water, and will be propelled by twin screws, which is a great factor of safety in war vessels. We have succeeded by the subsidy in bringing about the building of these two vessels, and the arrangement will carry the right of pre-emption to five other ships. The vessels so taken can attain to great speed and have wonderful coal endurance. Those of the White Star Line can keep the sea for 60 days at 10 knots, and those we have taken from the Peninsular and Oriental Company can keep the sea for 50 days. These are exceedingly important elements regarding any future war that may arise. The Admiralty have practically taken up every British ship that can go 16 knots and over. I do not think that can be regarded as a fiddling policy. I regard it as a liberal and practical policy. Then my hon. and gallant Friend has called the subvention a back door for preventing the building of adequate and sufficient cruisers. I have already dealt with that point. I assure my hon. and gallant Friend these vessels will be regarded as a supplementary aid to the Navy, and will in no way relieve the Board of Admiralty of the responsibility of dealing with the necessities of the Navy by the periodical production of suitable naval vessels. Then he said our policy will be decided by the policy of private shipowners. It is quite true; we cannot take up more vessels than private shipowners choose to build. But if we take up the fastest ships of the country, we certainly shall remove them from the chance of falling into the hands of a country hostile to us, and to this extent we limit the number of our own cruisers to watch the enemy's cruisers. The alternative policy suggested by my right hon. and gallant Friend was that we should arm these ships and let them go on the mail routes. I should like to know who would care to go in an armed mail cruiser, or what sort of a crew we should have to put on these armed mail cruisers. We should have to provide war ships to protect the mail vessels so armed. I think the alternative proposal of my hon. and gallant

Friend will not hold water alongside the practical policy adopted by the Government.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff): I do not propose to occupy the time of the Committe more than a minute, but I cannot let this Vote pass without a word. It cannot be doubted for a moment that the possession in the time of war of the fastest cruisers afloat is of the greatest moment to this country, and I am bound to say that, although I think the system which has been adopted by the Government admits of some improvement, they have as far as present conditions are concerned secured a very great advantage for the country. It cannot, I suppose, be doubted that in the fast mercantile steamers we get pretty nearly all that we have in fast unarmoured, unprotected cruisers. We get speed, which we want; we get a larger coal endurance than we get in the war ship, and, therefore, we get an enormous proportion of what we secure when we build an unarmed cruiser; and we get it, as I think the Admiralty have succeeded in getting it, on very moderate terms indeed. It may be, and I think it will be that this subject will from time to time engage the serious attention of Parliament; and I have no doubt that some of the points raised by my hon. and gallant Friend opposite (Captain Colomb) will weigh with the Administrators of the Navy in the future. I am glad the Government have taken the course they have taken. I say this for the reason that it so happens that on several occasions, when this country has been likely to enter upon war, I have myself been pressed, both directly and indirectly, to secure for foreign Powers some of our fastest mercantile vessels. I am glad I have never been associated with such a transaction. I know that great pressure of a similar kind has been brought to bear upon several individuals. With regard to putting penalties on shipowners if they allowed their vessels to pass into hostile hands in time of war, let me point out that it would be a very difficult matter indeed to frame an Act of Parliament to accomplish such an object, because the offer would never come directly from the Power which wanted the ship. The offer always comes through an indirect channel, and it would be impossible for Parliament to put a shipowner under Statutory obligations not to sell one of his own ships for his own advantage. I feel unable to support the Motion of my hon. and gallant Friend (Captain Colomb), and I am very pleased indeed to have to congratulate the country on having secured the right of availing itself in case of emergency of these fast vessels.

CAPTAIN COLOMB: I have no wish to delay Supply; but I am perfectly certain that when hon. Members come to consider the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) they will arrive at the conclusion that it is a very strong speech on my side. It is well to bear in mind that these 10 merchant steamers have to protect 80,000 miles of trade lines; 8,000 miles of trade line have to be covered by each of these ships. Then the hon. Gentleman said that they were to act as scouts to the Fleet. How can they do both?

MR. FORWOOD: I never said that these 10 steamers had to protect 80,000 miles of trade routes. All I said was that they would act as supplementary to naval forces.

CAPTAIN COLOMB: I understood the hon. Gentleman to say they were to watch the trade routes. There are upwards of 80,000 miles of trade routes counting all the trunk lines. These 10 vessels are always to be at our command, and by the alternate proposal all the mail vessels would be at our command. The hon. Gentleman has asked what sort of passengers would agree to go in armed cruisers? I put it to the hon. Gentleman whether, if he were coming from Bombay in time of war, he would not prefer to sail in a 17-knot armed cruiser rather than in a 14-knot unarmed vessel? I am sure that the more you investigate the matter the more you will find the arguments of the hon. Gentleman go a long way to establish my case. I beg to withdraw my Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): I should like to make a suggestion to the Government with the view of facilitating the course of Business. I know that the Government are anxious to get all the Estimates to-day with the view of saving a day. I think that might be effected if they would undertake to put the Report of the Army and Navy Estimates down first for to-morrow. I think that upon that understanding there would be no difficulty in obtaining the remaining Votes for the Army and Navy to-day.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The right hon. Gentleman was good enough to make the suggestion to me a few moments ago, and after conferring with the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton), and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope), I have no hesitation, if it is the wish of the House to agree to all the remaining Votes in the Army and Navy Estimates to-day, in putting the Report of Supply — that is, the Supply of this day—down on the Paper first to-morrow, so as to admit of any discussion which it may be thought necessary to raise. I venture, under these circumstances, to appeal to my hon. Friends behind me, who may have questions to raise deeply affecting them and their constituents, to be content to accept the engagement I am now prepared to enter into—that is, to allow all the Votes to go through this afternoon, and to take any discussion upon them to-morrow. I do not say this at all on the ground that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) suggested—namely, that it is for the convenience of the Government. The Government must be content to do their work; but I believe the House is weary and exhausted by the protracted Session, and the opportunity of saving a day is undoubtedly an opportunity which the Government ought to avail themselves of.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): In case the arrangement suggested is adopted, will the Indian Budget be taken on Friday?

MR. W. H. SMITH: Under such circumstances the Indian Budget will not be taken to-morrow, but on Friday.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum not exceeding £211,300, be granted to Her Majesty to defray the Expenses of the Admiralty Office, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888."

Mr. Shaw Lefevre

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E): I desire to ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) whether he can inform the House as to the course of the delay in the publication of the Report of the Royal Commission as far as it relates to the War and Admiralty Offices. The Report has, I believe, been sent to the printers, or has, at any rate, been drawn up for some time, and it would certainly have been of great convenience to the Committee if they had had the Report in their hands when the War Office Vote came on.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord George HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): I am afraid I cannot answer the hon. Gentleman's question. The hon. Gentleman will remember that I stated to him in answer to a question put some time back, that I was anxiously awaiting the Report; because until we have got it, it is impossible for us to take any step in the direction of reducing the Admiralty staff. I understand the Report has been assented to and sent to the printers. Perhaps I may allude to another subject in which, I believe, the hon. Gentleman is interested, and that has reference to contracts. We have practically assented, with one exception, to the recommendations of the Contract Committee. I dare say it will meet the views of the hon. Gentleman that we should lay on the Table of the House a Paper showing the manner in which we propose to give effect to the Report, so that hereafter if the arrangements do not meet with the approval of the House he will be able to raise a discussion upon the matter.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): In view of the arrangement which seems to have been arrived at in respect of the taking of all the Votes to-day, I should like to ask what is to be done with the Scotch Technical Education Bill?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I suppose we shall follow the usual course, and that is to take the Business as it stands on the Paper.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The reason why I was anxious to obtain information as regards the publication of the Report on the Royal Commission is, that without, indeed, divulging any secret, I may say as an ex-member of the Royal Commission, that we received evidence of a very explicit and positive kind that the Admiralty Authorities see their way to making a very great reduction in this Vote which is now before the Committee, especially in connection with the Department of the Accountant General. Under these circumstances, I think it would not be too much to ask the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty in charge of the Vote if he will now state shortly to the Committee what the amount of the reduction is expected to be, and whether it is to be carried into effect during the course of the present financial year?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I shall be happy to comply with the request made to me by the hon. Gentleman. Last year, in going through these Votes, I felt it my duty to counter-balance certain apparent increases by reductions in other establishments. The officials informed me that the Department which was capable of the largest reduction was that of the Accountant General. I have felt unable to take any action on my own initiative in the direction of reduction until the Commission, of which the hon. Gentleman was a Member, made their Report, as they gave their special attention to this subject. But I appointed a small Committee to investigate the work done by the different Departments, for the purpose of obtaining additional information enabling us to take action as soon as we got the Report of the Royal Commission. I cannot state in what direction that Report will go; but, assuming it will fall in with the views which the Board have formed, we hope to be able to effect very considerable reductions in the Admiralty. The reductions which should take place would be among the clerks of the higher division; but unless the Treasury will allow us to retire these clerks it will be almost impossible to effect the reduction. We had some communication with the Treasury some time back, and we were unable to come to a decision in the absence of the Report of the Royal Commission. I will undertake between now and next year that we will do our best to give effect to our views, and to those of the Royal Commission, and I think we ought to be able to effect considerable reductions. I will also undertake to lay on the Table a Paper showing the principles regulating the reductions.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): Will the noble Lord say what has been done with regard to the Navy taking over the responsibility of their own armaments?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: We have made no final arrangement for guns this year; but we have entered into a preliminary arrangement which I hope will ultimately facilitate the taking over by the Navy of their own guns. There are a number of questions connected with the testing and steeling of guns which must be settled before the Admiralty can undertake the responsibility of providing their own armaments.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Mr. Courtney, as economy is one of the cries of the day, I rise now for the purpose of expressing myself definitely about a specific object in connection with retrenchment. There are sinecures in connection with the Admiralty Offices which appear upon this Vote. We have all, no doubt, seen among the admirable sketches made by the late lamented John Leech the picture of a footman, in regard to whom the question was whether he was engaged for use or for ornament. Certainly, there appears to be one item under the Sub-Head "Salaries, Wages, and Allowances" which might be very properly struck out. Now, I do not like to say anything about any hon. Member in his absence; and, therefore, I am glad to see the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) in his place to-day. I do not see that there is any necessity whatsoever for the continuance of the Office of Civil Lord of the Admiralty, and therefore I suggest that the Office should cease to exist. I do not see that there is really any need of the Office at all. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has lately had a Parliamentary Under Secretary — [*Cries of* "Order!"] I am merely drawing an analogy between the different Offices. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland has great functions to perform in and outside the House, and he has appointed a Parliamentary assistant. Now, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty has not only one assistant, but, as we have seen to-day, he has two. I have not yet heard the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) take any part in a discussion whatsoever, and, indeed, only on two occasions during the past two years has the hon. Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) spoken in this House upon Admiralty matters. If there is anything to do in connection with the Office, it certainly must be of a most diminutive and microscopical character. If the Civil Lord of the Admiralty has nothing to do, why not at once effect a saving, and get rid of him altogether? We hear about subordinate clerks being cut down, and about Dockyard hands being discharged, why not get rid of the Civil Lord? I am sure the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) will understand that I am doing this in a plain, straightforward, and open way—indeed, I never attack anyone behind his back. When the rage for economy exists even in the minds of some hon. Gentlemen opposite, and notably in the mind of the noble Lord the Member for South Paddington (Lord Randolph Churchill)—who, unfortunately, is not here to-day—I call upon Her Majesty's Government and upon the Committee to take a firm stand and strike off this sinecure Office of Civil Lord. It is very hard that while the working men are being discharged from our Dockyards hon. Members who have nothing to do but answer one or two Questions in the year should enjoy large sinecures. I shall move the reduction of the Vote as soon as I have finished; but I want to call the attention of the Committee to the fact that, although the Civil Lord of the Admiralty has nothing to do, he is allowed an allowance of £50 a-year for a private secretary to assist him in doing nothing. It must be conceded that this is a flagrant and gross abuse, and that the sooner it is swept away the better—the sooner there is a clean sweep made through these Augean stables of Admiralty finance the better. Mr. Courtney, I have no wish to take up the time of the Committee unnecessarily; all I wish to do is to put the matter in a plain and straightforward way. I want to receive some information as to the duties the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty performs. I want to know why he is employed at all? If he is engaged for ornament, well and good; let him be paid as an ornamental adjunct to the Admiralty. If he is engaged for use, I want to know what his use his? I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000, being the salary of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A—Salaries—be reduced by £1,000."—(*Dr. Tanner.*)

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) is of opinion that my hon. Friend the Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) has nothing to do, and he has arrived at that conclusion from the fact that my hon. Friend has only spoken twice in this House upon Admiralty matters. The hon. Gentleman seems to imagine that the number of times a Member speaks in this House is an accurate gauge of the official duties he is called upon to perform. That is an altogether fallacious test. It not unfrequently happens that those officials who speak least do most work. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty has very important functions to perform. In the first place, my hon. Friend (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) is personally responsible for one of the largest Votes of the Navy—the Vote for Buildings. He has to watch over the expenditure connected with naval buildings, and he is responsible for the Estimate that is laid before Parliament. In the next place, my hon. Friend has personally to supervise the innumerable transactions which take place in reference to the Greenwich Hospital Schools and other establishments, and this entails a considerable amount of work. The last, and perhaps the most important, of my hon. Friend's duties is that he is responsible for all questions relating to pay, pensions, and superannuations. I assure the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Cork that, so far from having nothing to do, my hon. Friend has a great deal more work than the average amount of work which falls to a Parliamentary official. Well, naturally, having this work, he requires a secretary to assist him in it, and the remuneration his secretary gets is £1 per week. I think hon. Gentlemen will admit that is a very moderate allowance, and that it is certainly not in excess of the work the secretary has to discharge. The hon. Gentleman the

Member for Mid Cork has said that the First Lord of the Admiralty has two secretaries. That is true; but they do not perform work which ordinarily devolves upon private secretaries. There is an office in which Admiralty business is transacted, and my hon. Friends are responsible for the proper conduct of the business of that office. I am quite as much in favour of abolishing sinecures as anybody, and if the hon. Gentleman will show me that a sinecure really exists he will find the present Board of Admiralty quite ready to grapple with it.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Of course we are willing to take the statement of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty as to the duties performed by the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty. But we notice as a peculiar fact that, while it appears it is usually the duty of Ministers of the Crown to deal with the matters of their own Departments in debate, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) has, since his assumption of Office, been restrained from taking part in debate, or, at any rate, he has not been since his assumption privileged in any debate to explain any of the numerous and important matters concerning the Department of the Admiralty. So far as we can discover, the public services which the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield performs are those of an election agent. The hon. Gentleman does not often speak in the House, but he speaks very frequently in the country. I have paid some attention to his speeches in the country, and I find that they principally consist of imaginary attacks on the Irish people, and assaults upon the character and method of procedure of some of the Irish Members. These attacks and assaults he would not dare to utter in the presence of the hon. Members concerned. If services of this kind are to be performed, the people who consider them services ought to pay for them. I certainly object to services of this description being paid for out of the public Exchequer.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I do not know whether my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) proposes to proceed to a Division; but I trust he does not. I am bound to say that I do not admire the administration of the present Advisers of Her Majesty in most things; but I think the investment of this £1,000 as salary for the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, who used to represent the borough of Eye, and of whose performances in former years we have a lively recollection, is a very good investment indeed if silence on his part is one of the conditions of his appointment. Certainly, if silence is a condition, it is a very reasonable one, and has been very faithfully observed. Under these circumstances, I do not think the House has very much reason to complain of £1,000 being paid to the hon. Gentleman.

DR. TANNER: I think the time has come when an end should be put to these sinecures, and as long as I remain in this House I shall do my utmost to cut them away. In doing so I know I shall be following in the footsteps of really good economists on this side of the House. I look at this matter in a very much more serious light than many hon. Members, and I maintain that the Office of Civil Lord of the Admiralty is absolutely a sinecure. Of course, the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty could do nothing else but what he has done—namely, stand up for his Friends and Colleagues. I receive every suggestion made by the noble Lord with respect; but I know that some points cannot be explained away. Take the case of the Greenwich Hospital. Now, the administration of Greenwich Hospital is amply provided for out of the funds. The hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord of the Admiralty is really a Parliamentary appendage—a sort of Parliamentary frontispiece for a portion of the Admiralty Department. He was at one time one of the most valuable and constant speakers in this House; now he is one of the most silent Members. What is the use, in the name of common sense, of retaining his Office, which is unquestionably a sinecure? I must —to use a nautical phrase—nail my colours to the mast, and protest emphatically against this needless and unnecessary expenditure.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff): I hope the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Cork will not take a Division on this question. Of course, I am in no position to say anything about the manner in which the hon. Gentleman the present Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) performs his duty; but I am in a position to say, from a very considerable experience of the duties which ordinarily fall to the Civil Lord, that those duties are onerous and important. Some of the most distinguished men in this House have, in the capacity of Civil Lord of the Admiralty, performed public duties for the first time. It is a mistake for the hon. Member for Mid Cork to suppose that the Office is at all a sinecure; the Civil Lord of the Admiralty has a great deal of work to do. If the appointment of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) has had the effect of securing his silence in this House, while allowing him to display his eloquence elsewhere, I think it is a very desirable appointment; and to abolish the office of Civil Lord of the Admiralty would, I think, be a very unwise step.

Mr. SEXTON: The speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) has undoubtedly converted me. There is no doubt it is a great public gain that the eloquence of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Ecclesall Division of Sheffield (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) should be displayed on any other platform than that of the House of Commons.

Dr. TANNER: Of course, after the appeal made to me by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff and other hon. Friends I really can no longer persist in my opposition.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg leave to refer to the question I put a few moments ago with regard to the establishment of the Admiralty Department, and which the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) very courteously answered. The noble Lord admits that very considerable reduction is to be made; but he says that, on the other hand, there will be an increase on the Pension Vote. I think the Government ought to very seriously consider the matter before committing themselves to any particular line of action. At the last re organization of the Admiralty Department an enormous amount of money was wasted on pensions, just as a large amount was wasted at the last re-organization of the War Office. Men were pensioned who ought never to have been pensioned; and the Pension List of every branch of the Service—Naval, Military, and Civil—has grown to dimensions never before contemplated. We are about to take another step in the matter of re-organization, and we learn from the noble Lord that it is contemplated to make further additions to the Pension List. I wish to put in, at the earliest moment, my protest against such a policy. I do not believe it is at all necessary; and I think it might easily be avoided. Some time ago the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen), in replying to a query addressed to him by myself, recognized the expediency of utilizing, as far as possible, the services of men not required in the particular posts in the Civil Service they have hitherto filled in other Departments. I put it to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, whether it would not be perfectly practicable, in the case of the Admiralty Department, instead of putting men in the prime of life, many of them perfectly efficient, and good for many years' service still, on the Pension List, where they will have inadequate incomes compared with what they have had hitherto, and will have no chance of starting another career—I put it to him whether it would not be better to utilize these men in some other branch of the Public Service? With regard to the Accountant General's branch of the Admiralty, it is clear you have a duplication of work on a grand and perfectly unjustifiable scale. You have the accounts of the Admiralty audited by the Accountant General's branch, and you have also a large establishment of Departmental auditors going over the same ground. I freely admit it is necessary you should have something like an audit branch within the Admiralty itself for Departmental purposes; but you do not want that audit branch for any other reason than keeping the Minister informed, and keeping all his subordinates in charge of divisions informed, of the manner in which the Votes are being run off in the course of the financial year. But if you have an audit branch sufficiently large for the purpose of the Department, you do not want an enormous staff of auditors such as that which now composes the Department of the Accountant General. Surely the men employed in the Departmental audit branch could be utilized in the Office of the Accountant General, where they could do precisely the work they are doing now. I offer that as a suggestion, and I hope it may be practicable for the noble Lord to find the means of avoiding unnecessary increases of the Pension List.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am glad to have listened to the remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), because they are precisely in the direction we are going. I have already given orders under which the Comptroller and Auditor General will audit the store account of the Dockyards. We propose to dispense, as far as we can, with the Departmental audit. The accounts will go to the Comptroller and Auditor General, and there will be the greatest inducement to the officials of the Admiralty to see that their accounts are perfectly accurate. We believe that by this system we shall get rid of the duplication of work to which the hon. Gentleman has called attention, and that we shall have a much more rapid and satisfactory system of accounting in the Departments.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(4.) £204,900, for the Coast Guard Service and Royal Naval Reserves, &c.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Perhaps the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton) will be able now to give us some information on various points upon which, during the Session, I have endeavoured to obtain enlightenment, but with a complete want of success. I, for one, do not like to say anything against the Coast Guards. The Coast Guard Service is an excellent one, and I have often had opportunities of visiting the various stations—notably those on the Coast of Ireland—and I can truly say that the exemplary way in which the men behave themselves is worthy of all commendation and praise. But there are some few points in connection with the administration of the Service which demand some attention. During the course of last year I considered it a portion of my public duty to call attention to the existence of a very grave state of affairs at the Coast Guard Station at Rocket Point at the entrance to the Cove of Cork. I put Questions to the Government upon three different occasions with the object of remedying grievances which were borne witness to by the Coast Guards at this station, and grievances which were also testified to by naval officers stationed at Queenstown. Of course, I could not expect the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty to take notice of any representations I—a Nationalist Member—make; but I could not help believing that the noble Lord would look into the matter, or direct inquiries to be made, in face of the fact that the men at the station were practically moving in the matter. Now, Sir, what are the facts concerning this station? The Coast Guard Station at Rocket Point is inhabited by 51 persons. The Committee will see that the station, therefore, is one of paramount importance. It is a station at the entrance of our harbour, a harbour which is admitted by all authorities to be one of the finest, not only in Europe, but in the world. I am told that it is hardly inferior to the harbour of Rio Janeiro. A vast number of ships enter our port, and in consequence of this fact it becomes of paramount necessity that a large Coast Guard Service should be kept up in and about the station. There happens also to be another station at Crosshaven. Now, the Coast Guards at Rocket Point have no supply of water at all; and these men, who are placed upon this peninsular at the entrance to the Cork Harbour for the purpose, I presume, of visiting ships which pass either in or out of the port, and for the prevention of smuggling, have no means whereby they can launch their boats in heavy weather. The first question I have to put to the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty in connection with this Vote is one connected with the launching of boats in heavy weather. Now, let me say, without any desire to occupy the time of the Committee, that the station at Rocket Point is protected from the east and north winds; but, of course, everybody knows that on the South Coast of Ireland the prevailing winds for at least three portions of the year are westerly winds. This is patent to any visitor to our shores by the inclination of the trees. Practically, westerly winds are so prevalent that there is a bend in the trees, even on forest lands, towards the east. [*Cries of* "Order, order!"] I want to show that westerly winds are prevalent on the South Coast of Ireland, and that Rocket Point is unprotected from westerly winds. I have landed there again and again in summer, and I have attempted to land there in winter; but I have had to go round. Well, now, if the Coast Guards are at Rocket Point for the purpose of visiting vessels, surely they ought to have some means whereby they are able to launch their boats. I ask, in the first place, that a small boat harbour should be constructed at Rocket Point. I ask this in the interest of the Coast Guard Service. I may inform the noble Lord that if the expense of constructing a harbour there will be greater than he can sanction, I believe the various Companies who have stations at Rocket Point will join in the cost of the erection of such a structure as I suggest. I have been told it would be very hard to build a boat harbour there; but I am confident, if any hon. Gentleman visited the place, he would admit at once that there was no difficulty whatever in the construction of such a harbour. If, however, a boat harbour cannot be constructed, I certainly think that a small pier or boat-slip might be made. I have been told, too, that the men have experienced no difficulty hitherto in launching their boats; but, on the other hand, the men themselves emphatically assert that they have great difficulty in launching their craft from this rough and rocky shore. On former occasions I put the matter as plainly as I possibly could; but the noble Lord did not seem to see it. As a medical man, I certainly consider that the sanitary aspect of the case is deserving of consideration. As I have said, there are 51 persons resident at the station. But there are a great many other people on the Point besides. Now, all these people are totally unprovided with water, except such as they can collect from the roofs of the houses, and naturally the water collected in barrels from the roofs——

Mr. AIRD (Paddington, N.): Mr. Courtney, I rise to Order. It does seem to me that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) is simply discussing questions about the weather and the difficulty of launching boats merely for the purpose of occupying time—certainly not with any desire to expedite the Business of the Committee. [*Cries of* "Order, order!"] You say "Order, order;" but I decline to listen to your——

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I rise to Order, Sir. Is the hon. Gentleman entitled to make a speech on a point of Order?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is explaining the grounds on which he rose to Order, and he is entitled to do that.

Mr. AIRD: I have no wish to make a speech. My desire in rising to Order is to ask your opinion, Mr. Courtney, as to whether the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Cork is not going outside the scope of the particular Vote under discussion in elaborating, in the way he is doing, the particular remarks which it is his pleasure to make? I may say, speaking for myself, that instead of giving me pleasure his remarks give me pain.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The hon. Gentleman is now exceeding the proper limits of an explanation. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Cork is, no doubt, on the first view of the case, justified in opening up what he has entered into, because in this Vote there is provision made for the residences of Coast Guards; but, as a matter of fact, the houses and the accommodation for the Coast Guards in Ireland are provided by the Irish Board of Works, and it is under that Vote that the question should be raised, and not under this Vote.

Dr. TANNER: Of course, Sir, I shall act immediately upon any suggestion which comes from you. Well, Sir, I merely want to call attention to the absence of water supply, and I will do so in as few words as I possibly can.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I have pointed out that the question ought to be raised upon the Vote for Public Buildings in Ireland.

Dr. TANNER: Very well, Sir. Now, there are a couple of subsidiary points I should like to direct the attention of the Committee to. I have done with Rocket Point; but let me now say that Crosshaven, a place where there is also a Coast Guard Station, is a locality altogether out of the way. The men at Crosshaven are supposed to look after vessels coming into the Harbour of Cork;

but, strange to say, their station is about three miles from the point where they are supposed to perform their duties. I maintain that this is a practical absurdity, and that it can, moreover, be easily remedied by consolidating the whole lot in one place.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER (Lord JOHN MANNERS) (Leicestershire, E.): The hon. Gentleman seems to me to be now referring to a point which you, Sir, have ruled to be out of Order.

MR. SEXTON: I submit to you, Sir, that my hon. Friend is arguing that the Coast Guards are placed in such a locality that they cannot efficiently perform their duty; and that, I apprehend, comes under this Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: No doubt, as I have already said, the question of buildings must be raised under the Public Works Vote; but the question of the allocation of the Coast Guards is, no doubt, one which can be fairly discussed upon this Vote.

DR. TANNER: I am afraid I do not always put the case in the way I desire, and I trust that any shortcomings of mine will be forgiven by the Committee. I really do not want to inflict myself in any tedious way upon the Committee; but I desire to impress the fact upon the Committee that the Coast Guards at Crosshaven are unable, on account of their situation, to fulfil the duties which are allotted to them. You have got another Coast Guard Station at the other side of the Peninsular, and I cannot understand the use of scattering the force. In my opinion, it would be a great deal better if the Coast Guards at Rocket Point and at Crosshaven were amalgamated. There is a third point upon which I respectfully ask for information from the noble Lord. About 10 years ago the Coast Guards on the River Lee were entrusted with the conservancy of the lower waters of that river. It is extremely hard to preserve these waters. On a former occasion I asked the noble Lord to take into consideration whether, in view of the fact that the Coast Guards have very little to do, they might not again be entrusted with the conservancy of the Lee? The Coast Guards have steam launches and boats at their disposal, and I think they might be very usefully employed in preserving the Lee—a not unimportant duty. The Conservators of the river are anxious that the duty I have referred to should be once again entrusted to the Coast Guards. No constituents of mine have made this request; but, on the other hand, it is made by some personal friends of the noble Lord himself—by Lord Bandon and others. It is a very reasonable request, and I maintain that good will result to a large class of the community if it is acceded to, good will be done to the proprietors of the fisheries, and also to the many poor people who live by fishing. I trust the noble Lord will be able to see his way to accede to the request. By so doing he will certainly confer a boon upon a great number of people.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): Without any wish to protract the discussion, I desire to say a few words in support of the observations of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) respecting the Coast Guard Station on the Carrigaline River. No doubt the premises are very commodious and very comfortable, and one hesitates before suggesting that the men should be removed; but, at the same time, they are perfectly useless in times of emergency. First and foremost, in order to take observation they have to travel three miles over a hill and down into a hollow. They have no method of signalling, and they are quite useless in respect to the saving of life. I therefore desire to emphasize the representations my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork has made upon this question. He has very properly pointed out that on the other side of the water there is a very good Coast Guard Station, and to amalgamate the two bodies it would only be necessary to increase the accommodation at Rocket Point. At Rocket Point the Coast Guards are at the very mouth of the river; they are at the very spot where they can take observations both to the east and west; they are close at hand if they are required to render assistance to distressed vessels, and I cannot understand why the Admiralty should not take every possible step to make the station efficient. I am quite satisfied the only intention my hon. Friend has in bringing this matter forward is to facilitate the saving of life, and the rendering of assistance to vessels which may be in distress. I think that the gratitude of the Admiralty ought to be extended to my hon. Friend for having called attention to this subject. I expect that they will recognize his good intentions in this matter, and also the justice of the case he has made. My hon. Friend has pointed out that a Commission which reported upon the Coast Guards condemned this very station. I trust we shall get some satisfaction from the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty in this matter, and that when my hon. Friend goes back to Cork—as he will in a short time—and is sailing about the Bay, he will be able to tell his many friends living upon the banks of the river that he has been assured by the Admiralty that better provision will be made for the safety of life, and the rendering of assistance to vessels which may be in distress upon the Coast of Cork.

Dr. TANNER: I should like to say one word more. The noble Lord, in replying to a question concerning the water supply at Rocket Point, said——

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I have told the hon. Member he cannot, on this Vote, enter upon a discussion as to the accommodation provided.

Dr. TANNER: It is not a question of accommodation, Sir. I desire to point out to the noble Lord that he can bring pressure to bear to get certain provision made which is necessary for the people.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: Unless I have Notice of the intention of hon. Gentlemen to bring these matters forward, it is impossible for me to criticize observations founded on local knowledge. I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman that a Coast Guard Station ought to be made as useful as possible; and if he will put a Question upon the subject later on, when I shall have had time to obtain information, I shall be glad to answer it.

Dr. TANNER: Will he inquire from the people on the spot?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: The hon. Gentleman has suggested that the Coast Guard should be entrusted with the duty of preserving the River Lee. Now, I have great objection to the Coast Guards being employed in any such duty. It must be recollected that in many parts of the United Kingdom there are constant conflicts between fishermen and owners of fisheries. These conflicts create considerable ill-feeling, and I think it is very undesirable that a permanent Service like the Coast Guards should be drawn into them. I cannot make an exception in the case of the Lee.

Vote *agreed to.*

(5.) £108,800, for the Scientific Branch.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £553,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of New Works, Buildings, Yard Machinery, and Repairs, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888."

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Certainly, Sir, if there is any Vote which deserves consideration it is the Vote now proposed. My object in rising is to get some attention paid—some increased attention paid—to the new works in progress at the Alexander Yard, Haulbowline. When I was endeavouring, during the discussion of the Supplementary Estimates early in the Session, to get attention paid to the proceedings at this Yard, I was made the victim of the clôture on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith); and therefore I shall try, at the present time, to resume the thread of the argument which I was at that time trying—no doubt in a very feeble way, and very possibly in too prolix a way—to discuss. I called attention upon the Supplementary Estimates to the coaling wharf which is in course of construction at the present time, and for which money is paid under this very Vote. It is only about four years ago that a Commission recommended that a very large sum of money should be advanced in order to secure the completion of this work, a work which, in the opinion of the Committee, was of paramount importance, and of supreme urgency. Now, Sir, I think that anybody who knows the position which Queenstown occupies will admit that in time of war or emergency Queenstown will be a place of very great importance. There is no accommodation for filling the ships which may resort there with coal, and accordingly it was recommended that a large sum of money should be advanced for the purpose of constructing a coaling wharf. The Commission recommended an immediate outlay of £10,000 for the construction of a coaling wharf at Haulbowline. The Government now ask for

£3,000 for this wharf; but what else do they do? Although this is a matter of emergency, what do they do? They try to show the English people that they are saving money in connection with the administration of the Public Departments; but in order to do this they spread the payment of this miserable £10,000 over a number of years. I maintain that is wrong. It may be very plausible; but it is certainly very wrong. They are also discharging men at Haulbowline. I have called their attention to this again and again. They are discharging the men who are all-important in the construction of such a thing as a coaling wharf. Shipwrights are the men for such work; and I ask the noble Lord if he does not consider it right to continue the employment of the shipwrights at Haulbowline until this work is completed? Again, I desire to call the attention of the noble Lord to the works which are in course of construction at Haulbowline. I see by this Estimate that there is a large sum of money set down for new buildings at Haulbowline, for the extension of the yard. I ask the noble Lord if this is for the construction of a second dock? [Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: No.] Now, I know the place very well. I may say I know every foot of the ground. The present dock occupies the position of an island which was called Rat Island. Some time ago I asked the responsible authorities in connection with this work to direct their attention to two facts. The first point which I endeavoured to enforce upon their attention was that when they had an opportunity of taking a right step in the construction of a dock, somehow or other they blundered; they fell into the trap, for they built the dock in the wrong place. I will, in a few words, explain what I mean. There are two places where the dock could be built. The original plan was that there should be two graving docks; but the Admiralty chose to construct a deep-water dock with a small intervening partition of red sand-stone between the dry dock and the river. What has been the consequence? Why, it has been that they cannot keep the dock dry, and they have had to employ pumps and all sorts of appliances in order to make the dock waterproof; whereas had they chosen the other side of the river, which was on a mud bank, there would have been no leakage whatever; they would have saved a great deal of expense; and they would have made a very satisfactory job. At present it is merely a patched-up job, because the work is always liable to break down again. I ask the noble Lord to bear this fact in mind, and to bear in mind also the position of the Port of Queenstown, to bear in mind the fact that Queenstown, from its position, may very probably become a place of paramount importance in the event of a great war. I ask that a second dock be constructed. The original design contemplated two docks. I have taken several English Members over the works, and they have not all belonged to this side of the House. I have shown them the original design on which two docks are drawn. Why, in the name of common sense, if there is a deficiency in one dock, should you not go on with the other? By making a second dock you would only be carrying out the original design. The construction of a second dock would give rise to the employment of many of the distressed classes in Ireland; and I think it is our duty to insist upon the great spending Departments spending some amount of money in our country, from which they draw so much. I trust that the noble Lord will be able to give us some satisfactory assurances on this head.

MR. JOHN O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): I shall not detain the Committee many minutes; but I ask the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty to say whether it is the intention of his Department to carry out the original design of the Haulbowline Docks? It has been pointed out by my hon. Friend and Colleague the Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) that the graving dock, which is now almost complete, has a very extensive leak in it—that it is only by the use of very powerful pumps that the graving dock is kept dry. It has been stated, in reply to several Questions on this subject, that the present graving dock is not large enough for the vessels which are now afloat. It was thought by the Admiralty that this graving dock might be used for the purpose of docking the large Transatlantic steamers. ["No, no!"] One of the Junior Lords of the Admiralty contradicts me; but this dock was designed 20 years ago, and since that time a complete revolution has occurred in the construction of our vessels. Very well, the graving dock at Haulbowline is not as useful as it was supposed it would be. It is absolutely useless; it has been so stated by the First and Junior Lords of the Admiralty. Then, why not carry out the original design? There is material there—there is space there to make a dock sufficiently large to be useful for the purpose of repairing the largest of Her Majesty's ships. The request of my hon. Friend the Member for Mid Cork is perfectly reasonable. The present graving dock is useless for the purpose for which it was constructed. Why not make a second? What is asked is most reasonable to my mind, and to the mind of any common-sense man. We have reason to suspect that there is no desire whatever on the part of the Admiralty to make any use whatever of this dock. We have every reason to suspect that the Admiralty want to keep these works dilly-dallying, because, if they were to complete them, they would be obliged to give out some work at Queenstown. If the shed for which money was voted two years ago were made, it would stand to reason that some work should be given out to be done in the shed. If some machinery were placed in the machine shed, it would be but reasonable that the machinery should be employed. They have not completed the engine shed; they have not put up any machinery; they have not used the money granted by this House for the purpose. We have a right to suspect that the Admiralty are only keeping on this work as a sham—that they wish to throw dust in our eyes, or otherwise the works would not be 20 years in the course of completion. What we want to do is to hasten the completion of the works. What we require is that a portion of the Admiralty work should be done in Queenstown. Instead of a few convicts being employed on these works, we want to see large numbers of the labouring population employed upon them. We want a due proportion of taxation spent in our country. Our desires have been frustrated by the procrastination of the Admiralty. It may be tedious to you, Sir, and to many other Members of the Committee, that we should stand up here over and over again to bring forward this question, to reiterate the statements we have made time after time fruitlessly, and to beg Members of the Admiralty to give us some satisfactory assurances in this matter, to complete these works, to carry out the beneficent intentions of Lord Spencer and those who took it into their head to construct this dock. We will not be put off by such replies as the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty has hitherto made to our Questions. It is not enough to say that this graving dock is insufficient for the purpose intended. We wish to have another dock there, and we shall continue to press our demand until the original design is carried out.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): I made a personal inpection of the Dock at Haulbowline last year and the year before. With respect to the supposed leakage, let me say that, though there was leakage through the fissures in the limestone when the dock was in course of construction, the dock has never leaked since it was finished.

DR. TANNER: According to the Report, it leaked last November.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: My information is that since the dock was finished there has been no leakage. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Cork asked me a question about the coaling wharf. The Commission to which the hon. Gentleman referred did propose that a certain amount of money should be spent. We propose to take £3,000 for the jetty; but we have not decided what is the best means of getting the coals on board. Experience shows that, as a rule, baskets and hand labour is the best. The hon. Gentleman the Member for South Tipperary (Mr. John O'Connor) alluded to the fact that originally there was some talk of constructing two graving docks. The Admiralty never assented to that proposal. The graving dock has, up to the present, cost £550,000, and it is big enough to take in the largest vessel of Her Majesty's Navy, though not the largest of the Atlantic liners, which have become bigger since the dock was designed. Considering the enormous sum which it would be necessary to spend in the building of a second dock, and considering all the difficulties which would have to be encountered in the construction of a dock to accommodate some of the huge vessels now afloat, I do not think we should be justified in entering upon the work. Moreover, I do not think the dock would be of the slightest benefit to the locality. I certainly cannot hold out any hope of a second dock being constructed at Haulbowline. I understand the suggestion has been made that we should try and get all the Votes before you leave the Chair. I hope that, in accordance with that suggestion, we may now pass the remaining Votes and take the Report to-morrow.

DR. TANNER: Before the Vote is passed, I should like to point out to the noble Lord that if, in the event of war, a vessel broke down in the Atlantic, the first place of call would be Haulbowline. It would take two days longer to bring the vessel to England, and entail considerable risk and expense. This dock would be all-important in the case of emergency. Now, there is a small and minor point I would like to enforce upon the attention of the noble Lord; and it is that now, when the graving dock is finished, you are going to commence excavations for the passage from the floating dock to the deep water. I asked a Question upon the subject last September. I am not an expert in these matters, but I have received considerable information from naval officers whose names, of course, it would not be right for me to mention. I am told that the dock is complete, with the exception of the entrance, which you are now only commencing to make. It is like building a house and not putting a door to it.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff): I appeal to hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway to allow the Votes to go through on the understanding arrived at.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I should like to say I have never yet known these understandings result in anything but acrimonious wrangles. What is it we are asked to do? To vote away millions of money in as many minutes. I, for one, beg to say such a proceeding is exceedingly improper. As to an understanding, there must have been some interchange of opinion or wish between the two Front Benches; but it is not from the two Front Benches this country or this House can look for economy. Of course, I can only speak for myself; but I repudiate any responsibility for any declaration made from the Front Benches with respect to the discussion of the Estimates.

SIR EDWARD REED: There was an understanding to which no one took exception.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): There was an understanding as to another Vote; but that understanding was broken in the most deliberate manner by the Government last night.

DR. TANNER: I have not received an answer sufficient to justify the action of the Admiralty in respect of the Haulbowline Dock; and, accordingly, without any qualm of conscience whatever, I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A be reduced by the sum of £1,000, Works at Haulbowline."—(*Dr. Tanner.*)

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I think that on questions of this kind there should be a little give and take; but, unfortunately, so far as the Government is concerned, it is all take and no give. We are asked to meet the convenience of the Government; but the Government seem to have no regard for the convenience of us or of our country. I should be disposed to yield to the appeal made to us but for the fact that the Government have allowed their supporters in "another place" to mutilate and destroy the Truck Bill.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 24; Noes 94: Majority 70.—(Div. List, No. 464.) [5.40 P.M.]

It being a quarter of an hour before Six of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to report Progress.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*.

Committee also report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

QUESTION.

——o——

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he can give us any assurance that the Scotch Technical Schools Bill will be taken to-morrow night? I may be allowed to add that the Scotch Members consider they have been very badly treated in being kept here night after night for the Bill, in the hope of its coming on.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I think the Scotch Members have hardly any reason to complain of the manner in which they have been treated. It is Scotch Members who have objected to Scotch Business being brought forward, and not the Government, who were unwilling to bring Bills on. In the case of this Bill, the Government have been anxious to bring it forward, and the Scotch Members have objected to it. [Mr. MASON: Very few.] That may be; but they were sufficient to prevent the Bill being taken. I hope the Bill will be taken to-morrow night. However, I can state positively that it is the intention of the Government to pass the Bill this Session, whether or not it is necessary to keep the House sitting one, two, or three days longer for the purpose.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 8th September, 1887.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Committee*—Coal Mines, &c. Regulation (251); Labourers' Allotments (252).

Committee — Report — Charity Commissioners (Officers) * (254); Tramways (War Department) (255).

Report—Friendly Societies Act (1875) Amendment (No. 3) * (256).

Third Reading — Metropolitan Police * (242), and *passed.*

ARMY—SUPPLY OF HORSES FOR MILITARY PURPOSES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD CLINTON asked, Whether Her Majesty's Government are in a position to make any statement as regarded the establishment of a Reserve of Horses for military purposes?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Lord HARRIS): I am glad of the opportunity given by this Question to state the intention of the Government. Your Lordships will recollect that some months ago the noble Lord (Lord Ribblesdale) raised a discussion on the subject of the supply of horses, which remotely touched the question of horses for military purposes. The main object he had in view has, I believe, been dealt with by another Department; but I stated on that occasion that the Secretary of State would give careful consideration to any schemes that might be presented to him, having for their object the supply of horses for military purposes, and I am now prepared to state the result. Communications were received from many quarters presenting a great variety of views on the subject; some were for organizing breeding establishments, others for subsidizing stallions and mares, and others, again, for the purchase by Government of horses which should be lent to the Yeomanry, who would undertake the expense of keeping them, on the understanding that the horses were to be handed over to Government when wanted. Most of the schemes, however, would have involved a far greater expense, commensurate with the possible result, than the Secretary of State dared to contemplate; and many of them were based on the fallacy that these Islands are unable to supply easily the normal annual demand for military purposes. Military requirements may be divided into two large divisions as regards numbers, and also several subdivisions as regards stamp. The two large divisions show, on the one side, the normal and annual demand, affected by deaths and casting, and which may be taken as ranging between 1,400 and 2,000 horses. There is not the slightest difficulty in getting this number at Government prices in these Islands, the Cavalry horse, as a rule, coming from Ireland, the Artillery and Transport horse from Great Britain. On the other side is the abnormal demand which might suddenly arise from a mobilization of forces. The smaller sub-divisions, as regards stamp, represent the Cavalry, the Artillery, and the Transport horse. The abnormal demand is the question which the Government have been desirous of arranging for, and they have now prepared a scheme to meet that demand. The actual number required depends, of course, upon the number of troops mobilized; but we have no fear that the country is incapable of producing, for registration purposes, such a number of horses as will meet all reasonable requirements. The number required we believe to exist; but, without a registration system, it would be impossible to select and collect any large number in the time within which it should be possible to bring the horses together. Experience has proved how much time is consumed in the appointment of selection committees, the mapping out of districts, giving notice to owners of horses, and the examination and selection. To avoid that delay has been our object, while, at the same time, we have endeavoured, by preferring a voluntary system, to obviate discontent. Your Lordships may have noticed in the reports of the mobilization experiment in France that the Government have requisitioned horses for military purposes. Such a requisition must, one would think, cause dissatisfaction, or a heavy expenditure, and would, I trust, only be resorted to in England at a very grave crisis. Without a system of registration it might, however, at some time or other, become necessary, and can be avoided only by a system of registration. I have stated that we propose to make the system voluntary, or I should rather say, perhaps, that we are going to make an experiment in that direction. Compulsory registration was considered, but discarded, mainly because of the very large number of horses it would entail, many of them unsuitable for military purposes, and because, as well, of the expense of registering such numbers. What the Government propose to do is to offer an annual fee for all horses up to a certain number and within a certain age, suitable for military purposes, the owners of which are willing to place them on the register. The horses would be examined for soundness and suitability by a registration staff, and a further inducement to owners to come forward voluntarily would be an enhanced price over the Government price of the year if the horse is taken by the Government, as a compensation for the loss of its services. It is, of course, impossible to say now whether this experiment will prove successful; we are hopeful that it will, and that owners of horses—more particularly owners of large numbers of horses—will come forward in order to benefit by the receipt of the annual fee. If it is successful, it should, from a financial point of view, be an economical system, being more or less in the form of an insurance against war risks; while, from a military point of view, the most beneficial results should ensue; for, on mobilization becoming necessary, the Military Authorities will have at hand a list of horses, with information as to where they are situated, and as to what purpose they are best suited. They will also be easily recognizable by a system of numbers, and easily transferable to such points of concentration as may be decided upon. The experiment will first be tried in the Metropolitan area; but it is contemplated to extend the system eventually to the whole of Great Britain and Ireland. I imagine it is probable that in its initiation the class of horse which will be found forthcoming will be suitable for Artillery and Transport purposes, as, the experiment being in London, the large Companies are most likely to meet the demand; but I hope to see the system extended in such a way as will produce the Cavalry horse as well. I would point out to your Lordships one very great advantage—namely, that these horses, if ever taken up by the Government, will, in the vast majority of cases, be seasoned horses in hard condition, not young and green, without the condition to do a day's march, or the stamina to survive a campaign. Treasury sanction has been given in general to the scheme, though there are still some points of detail as regards pay to the staff which have to be settled; but I was anxious to make this statement before your Lordships rose, and assurance having been given by the Secretary of State some time back in "another place" that the matter was under consideration. I should add that it would be more difficult to put this system into practice had it not been for a change that is about to be made in the system of purchasing remounts. Hitherto, those for Cavalry purposes have been bought by the commanding officers of Cavalry regiments, and for Artillery purposes by the Inspector and purchaser of horses for the Royal Artillery. In future, all horses for military purposes will be examined, selected, and passed into the Army by the officers of a remount establishment at headquarters. Among other advantages, we hope by this change to meet, to a certain extent, the complaint that has been made in many quarters that breeders of horses cannot get them viewed by Government buyers. The registration of horses will be dealt with by this staff, whose business it will be to examine the horses for suitability and soundness, to register them in such a way as to render them distinguishable, and to keep the registers so as to obviate delay when the transmission of horses to selected centres or ports of embarkation is necessary. My Lords, this is an experiment, I admit. The voluntary system is objected to by some whose opinion is of the highest value; but I am hopeful that competition among owners of horses will produce the desired result. The voluntary system has raised a magnificent army of citizen soldiers; I hope it may answer as regards a supply of horses; and but a modicum of the success that has attended the first will be sufficient to remove any anxiety as to the Army being sufficiently horsed when the crisis comes.

COAL MINES, &c. REGULATION BILL.

(*The Viscount Cross.*)

(NO. 251.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

Clauses 1 to 9 severally *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Payment of school fees out of wages).

On the Motion of The Viscount Cross, the following Amendments made:—In page 4, line 7, after ("boy") insert ("or girl"); line 8, after ("in") insert ("or in connection with"), and after ("boy") insert ("or girl"); line 9, after ("boy") insert ("or girl"); line 10, after ("boy") insert ("or girl"); line 13, after ("boy") insert ("or girl"); and in line 14, after ("boy") insert ("or girl").

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 11 *agreed to.*

Clause 12 (Payment of persons employed in mines by weight).

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Viscount CROSS), in moving an Amendment authorizing the Secretary of State, in the case of mines employing not more than "30" persons underground, to provide, if considered expedient, the payment of such persons by any method other than that in the Act, said, that the effect of the Amendment would be to bring under the regulations of the clause a number of mines other than coal mines. The question of the thin seam mines was involved. According to the existing law, the Secretary of State had the power of exemption in all thin seam mines; but according to the Bill, as presented to their Lordships, that power of exemption was taken away, except in cases where only 20 persons were employed underground. The reason of the limit was this. In the cases where minerals had to be weighed it was necessary that weighing machines should be provided at the top of the pit, in order that the material should be properly weighed and the machine properly inspected. But it had always been thought that in the case of small mines this would put the owner to great expense; and therefore the object of the clause, as it at present stood, was to allow the Secretary of State to make an exemption in the case of small mines where 20 persons were employed underground. The Amendment he proposed would meet the objections of some mine owners by raising the number from 20 to 30. The noble and learned Lord opposite (Lord Bramwell) had asked, on a previous occasion, the reason of the provision. He (Viscount Cross) understood that since 1867 the miners, as a body, had thought that any other way of measuring the amount of their work was rough and uncertain. There was a great deal of dissatisfaction among the miners, owing to this uncertainty of receiving a due amount of pay for the due amount of work performed. It was, therefore, thought that it would be advisable to institute a uniform practice, so far as it could be attained. The noble and learned Lord asked if the miners in a particular mine were agreed, and the Secretary of State was agreed, why not leave them alone? The question was difficult to answer; but the only reply he could give was that the miners, as a body, decidedly objected to the discretion of the Secretary of State.

Amendment *moved*, in page 5, line 30, to leave out ("twenty") and insert ("thirty").—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

LORD BRAMWELL said, if the noble Viscount was satisfied, it was no use for him (Lord Bramwell) to object; but he must say that it seemed to him that the proposition was a most unreasonable one.

VISCOUNT CROSS said, he would undertake that before the third reading he would consider what further could be done in the matter of relaxations to meet the case of quarries where wages were paid at present by measure.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 13 to 37, inclusive, severally *agreed to,* with an Amendment.

Clause 38 (Plan of abandoned mine or seam to be sent to the Secretary of State).

On the Motion of The Viscount CROSS, the following Amendment made:—In page 20, line 4, to leave out from ("than") to ("inch") in line 5, and insert ("that of the ordnance survey of twenty-five inches to the mile").

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clauses 39 to 48, inclusive, severally *agreed to,* with Amendments.

Clause 49 (General rules).

On the Motion of The Viscount CROSS, the following Amendment made:—In page 28, line 30, leave out ("mines") and insert ("mine").

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) read a telegram from the solicitor of the Associated Colliery Owners of Monmouthshire and South Wales, representing the injuries that must arise to all colliery owners and working miners by an Amendment carried without previous Notice in the other House on the Report stage of the Bill. The Amendment was to Clause 49, General Rule 26, requiring an automatic contrivance to prevent over-winding when the men are being raised out of a mine, or, alternatively, that the speed should not exceed three miles an hour. There was, the writer said, no safe and reliable automatic contrivance to prevent over-winding. Their use was full of peril, and their presence led to carelessness by the engineman, who left the machinery to its own operation. Hence, such an apparatus would cause more accidents than it would prevent. On the other hand, the telegram went on to represent the three miles an hour alternative was absolutely impracticable; it could never be observed. The working men themselves would resist it, because, under it, in a colliery, say, only 500 yards deep, and employing only 500 men, more than six hours would be required to clear the mine, for, as a rule, only 80 men could be lifted in an hour; and, consequently, it would take 12½ hours to lift 1,000. The hope was expressed that the provision would be expunged, or that it would be so qualified as to give a dispensing power to the Home Secretary. The telegram was signed by "W. Simmons, Merthyr Tydvil," who, the noble and learned Lord said, was not only a person very familiar with collieries, but had been consulted by colliery owners and working miners for many years in that district.

VISCOUNT CROSS said, the provision referred to in the telegram was Clause 26 of the General Rules, and he would be prepared to deal with it in its order.

Amendment *moved,* in page 30, line 29, to leave out from ("inflammable") to ("lamps") inclusive, in line 30.—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Viscount CROSS, the following Amendments made:—In rule 12, page 32, line 41, leave out ("rule") and insert ("Act"); page 33, line 5, leave out ("of subhead (*g*)") and insert ("in this Act relating to ventilating districts"); line 10, leave out ("subsection") and insert ("subhead"); and in page 33, line 38, leave out ("in coal mines"). In rule 24, page 34, leave out from ("of age") in line 34 to ("shall") in line 35; and in page 35, leave out line 8.

Rule 26.

VISCOUNT CROSS, referring to the matter brought forward by his noble and learned Friend (Lord Halsbury), said, he quite agreed that it was clearly absolutely impossible that the stages should only go at the rate of three miles an hour. Therefore he would move for the purpose of meeting the objection, the rule being, as it stood, incomplete owing to an oversight in the House of Commons, to add words providing that the cage when raising the men should not be wound up at a speed exceeding three miles an hour, after the cage has reached a point in the shaft to be fixed by the special rules.

Amendment *moved,* in page 35, line 22, after ("hour") insert ("after the cage has reached a point in the shaft to be fixed by the special rules.")—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Viscount CROSS, the following Amendments made:—In rule 38, page 36, line 36, leave out ("or have been"); rule 39, page 37, line 13, leave out ("a").

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

On the Motion of The Viscount Cross, the following Amendments made:—In Clause 59, page 41, line 11, after ("agent") leave out ("or") and after ("manager") insert ("or under-manager"); line 16, after ("agent") leave out ("or") and after ("manager") insert ("or under-manager"); Clause 64, page 42, line 25, after ("coal") insert ("or ironstone"); Clause 76, page 46, line 30, leave out ("chairman of quarter sessions") and insert ("police magistrate"); line 36, leave out sub-section (10.) and substitute—

"(10.) Sections forty-one and sixteen of the Public Health (Scotland) Act, 1867, shall respectively be substituted for sections thirty-eight and ninety-one of the Public Health Act, 1875."

Clause 77, page 47, line 16, leave out ("subhead (*c.*)") and substitute—

"(*c.*) Sections forty-eight and one hundred and seven of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, shall respectively be substituted for sections thirty-eight and ninety-one of the Public Health Act, 1875;"

line 19, after ("expression") insert ("police or"); Clause 82, page 48, line 37, after ("mine") insert as a separate sub-head—

"(*c.*) Prevent a competent male person above the age of eighteen years who before the commencement of this Act is lawfully employed in working the machinery used for lowering and raising persons in a mine from continuing to be so employed;"

line 41, after ("girl") insert ("or competent male person"); Schedule 3, page 51, after line 13 insert in a separate line ("Name of under-manager"); Schedule 3, page 51, line 39, after ("drawn") insert as follows:—

——	Number of Days on which was drawn	
	1. Coal.	2. Ironstone.
January		
February		
March		
April		
May		
June		
July		
August		
September		
October		
November		
December		

The Report of Amendments to be received *To-morrow*, and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.

LABOURERS' ALLOTMENTS BILL.

(*The Viscount Cross.*)

(No. 252.) COMMITTEE.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee read.

Moved, "That the House do now resolve itself into a Committee upon the said Bill."—(*The Viscount Cross.*)

THE EARL OF FEVERSHAM said, that, while he fully appreciated the difficulties of Her Majesty's Government in dealing with the course of Public Business in the other House of Parliament, at the same time he thought a measure of this importance, dealing, as it did, with the proprietary rights of the landowners of this country, should have been considered by their Lordships at a time when it could receive the full attention of the House. He regretted that the Bill had been put down for Committee at such short Notice, as he knew that there were several noble Lords who had wished to discuss the question. With regard to the general object of the measure, he had always expressed his opinion in favour of increasing the number of allotments available for the working classes. He objected, however, to the compulsory powers given by the Bill. They had had no evidence before them which would show that there was any difficulty in obtaining allotments; and he thought that before they adopted the principle of the compulsory taking of land contained in the Bill they might have had some further inquiry. It would have been far better to have rested the Bill upon the readiness of landowners to give allotmedts, rather than by this compulsory clause to rob them of any credit in the matter. Before adopting that principle they should have tried the voluntary system, and if they had found it fail they could have gone back on to compulsion. He denied, however, that the voluntary system would have failed. He regretted that Her Majesty's Government, whether from Parliamentary or electoral exigencies, had gone as far as they had done in this Bill. He did not propose, however, to offer opposition to the passage of the measure, or to detain their Lordships by moving Amendments.

Lord MONK BRETTON said, that if the Bill had come before their Lordships at an earlier period of the Session, he might have felt disposed to move certain Amendments. But he did not disapprove of the Bill as a whole, and he cordially approved of its object. He should be sorry to see it delayed or endangered, and he therefore hoped that it would pass through the House without Amendment, or, at all events, without any Amendment of a contentious character. He thought the Government, especially the President of the Local Government Board, had dealt very fairly and reasonably with the subject in the circumstances in which they had been placed towards the end of the Session.

The Earl of DUNRAVEN said, he did not consider the Bill altogether incapable of amendment. If there were time and opportunity it would be possible to make suggestions perhaps of some value in the way of simplifying the methods and machinery of the measure; but it would be most unfortunate at that period of the Session if any Amendment were made which would tend to delay, and possibly to defeat, the Bill. He desired to know whether Clause 12 of the Bill would permit of the allotment managers turning part of the common land into meadow for the purposes of securing hay. There was some doubt on this point. He must be allowed to express his personal satisfaction, and he also believed that of the great majority of their Lordships, at Her Majesty's Government having been able to deal with the allotments' question that Session; and in spite of the somewhat ominous circumstance that his noble and learned Friend (Lord Bramwell) was in favour of the Bill, he thought it would be found to work well.

The Earl of WINCHILSEA said, he also approved of the Bill; but he desired to move an Amendment to Clause 12 if, in its present shape, it would not permit the allotment managers to set apart common land for hay, as it would be of little use supplying pasturage for labourers' cows, if means were not also taken to supply them with hay during winter. He should like to know whether the point had been considered by the Government.

Lord BALFOUR said, the point had been considered, and the Local Government Board were advised that there was nothing in the clause to prevent the allotment managers making provision for the supply of hay, as suggested.

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (The Earl of Onslow) said, that he, too, had been assured by a high authority that the clause in its present form would have the effect desired.

Viscount CROSS said, he could not allow the debate to close without expressing his acknowledgments to the House for the way in which the Bill had been received.

Motion *agreed to;* House in Committee accordingly; Bill *reported* without Amendment, and to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

TRAMWAYS (WAR DEPARTMENT) BILL.

(*The Lord Harris.*)

(No. 255.) COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Lord Harris) said, the object of the Bill was to enable the Secretary of State to acquire, in a more simple form than he now could, such land as was necessary for military tramways for the defence of the country. The existing powers of the Secretary of State were defined by the Defence Act of 1842; but in effect it had been found an exceptionally cumbrous Act to work. There were at present several instances —at Stromal Common in Yorkshire, and Chatham in the South of England—where the War Department wished, and where it was actually necessary for the defence of the country, that tramways should be made for military purposes; but it so happened that though running for their greater length over War Department lands there were small plots intervening, and rights of way crossing the proposed line. The Act now introduced would render it a more simple process for the Secretary of State to acquire these plots, and to run round, or cross the highways; while at the same time the public would be protected in the first instance by a Petition to the Board of Trade against the Provisional Order, and ultimately, if no agreement could be come to between the parties, to Parliament before the Provisional Order could be confirmed.

Bill *reported* without Amendment, and to be read 3ª *To-morrow.*

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE BILL.

MOTION.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Duke of BUCKINGHAM and CHANDOS), in rising to move that that "Bill be not further inserted in the list of Bills in progress," said, that he made the Motion, not with any desire to oppose the Bill, or to deprive the noble Lord who introduced it (Lord Denman) of any legitimate opportunity of bringing the question forward, but solely with the view of preserving the regularity of proceedings in their Lordships' House. Formerly, a Bill could be entered in the Minutes as rejected; but for the last half century the practice had prevailed of moving that a measure be postponed for three, or six months. That was considered a more courteous way of dismissing a Bill from consideration than a direct Motion for its rejection. It was, in fact, laid down by the authorities that this postponement of a measure was equivalent to its rejection, and hitherto such postponement had invariably been viewed as the dismissal of the measure from further consideration for the Session. Now, the Women's Suffrage Bill was rejected in the early part of the Session in the usual way — namely, by a Motion postponing it for six months. That period of time having elapsed, and the Session not having ended, the Bill was again put down for second reading; but their Lordships, having regard to the circumstances of the case, determined that the Question should not be put. If Bills which had been rejected by Motions of postponement were to be resuscitated, as that Bill had been, in the same Session of Parliament, it would be necessary to consider whether the practice of the House ought not to be changed. But as the practice that a postponement for three or six months was equivalent to the rejection of a measure had been universally recognized up to the present, it would, he thought, be well to adhere to the practice as it existed now. The special difficulty in connection with the Bill before their Lordships would be got rid of by the Resolution which he had placed on the Paper, and which he now begged to move.

Moved, "That the Bill be not further inserted in the list of Bills in progress printed with the Minutes of this House." —(*The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos.*)

LORD DENMAN said, he must be allowed to express his regret that the Bill could not be favourably entertained. There had been no real objection offered to the principle of the Bill when he introduced it, and there was no valid reason for not proceeding with it. The Prime Minister simply asked their Lordships to postpone it entirely out of deference to the other House, which had a Women's Suffrage Bill before it. He considered that the municipal franchise having been given to women in Ireland, it followed that the Parliamentary franchise ought to be given to women possessing the necessary legal qualifications. He was an old man, and was more indebted than most people to sensible women, and he should like to know that after his death his widow would have a vote. He hoped he would be allowed to put the Bill down for a second reading to-morrow.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord HALSBURY) said, he did not think that the Bill was likely to engage much of their attention during the remainder of the Session; but the question of precedent in connection with procedure in such cases might be important hereafter. He could not help thinking that the noble Lord (Lord Denman) had successfully disposed of his own argument. He said that it was a lunar month, and that the month brought the date on a Sunday. If that were so, the Bill was postponed to a period when the House was not sitting, and it fell under the recognized practice when the Session had expired. He believed that the calendar month was the proper construction of the month in that House; but if it was a lunar month, the noble Lord did not on the proper day move the Bill when it came on, therefore it was a lapsed Order, and the Bill, according to Parliamentary practice, ought not to be proceeded with. If, under such circumstances, the Bill was to be revived, it must be done by a Motion made in the House, and could not be done by a noble Lord going to the Clerk at the Table and making a private communication. He thought that if their Lordships assented to the noble Lord's proposal they would establish a precedent of the greatest possible inconvenience. If Bills disposed of as this had been disposed of were to be revived, and the understanding which now existed was departed from, it would be necessary to move the rejection of Bills, and this would be obviously inconvenient. The old form of moving the rejection of a Bill, of course, killed it for ever; but he rather thought the more courteous form of postponement for six months was adopted on the understanding that the Bill should not be brought forward again in the same Session. As to the Motion of the noble Duke the Chairman of Committees, he was not sure that that was strictly in order; but he hoped their Lordships would not be troubled again by questions of this kind.

Motion *agreed to.*

GOVERNMENT OF MALTA.

QUESTION.

EARL DE LA WARR asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether it was convenient to give further information with regard to the suggestions of the Maltese people on the subject of Constitutional changes in the Local Government; whether they would be favourably considered; and what course Her Majesty's Government proposed to take in respect of them?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ONSLOW), in reply, said, the Government had received the draft of a project for the formation of a Constitution, drawn up by a Committee appointed by an assembly of citizens in Malta. In forwarding the draft scheme, the Governor desired to inform the Secretary of State of the spirit of moderation which had been exhibited by the gentleman who had had a conference with him, and the spirit so evinced enabled the Governor to believe that a scheme for the government of the island might be satisfactory to the inhabitants. In reply to this despatch, the Secretary of State informed the Governor that he approved his action in the matter, and was gratified by the conciliatory tone in which the communications between himself and the Committee had been conducted. The Secretary of State added that he desired to arrive at a conclusion to meet the wishes of the people of Malta, and that the present proposals would have his most careful consideration. At present the Lieutenant Governor was engaged in taking an active part in the measures to arrest the spread of the infection of cholera which unfortunately prevailed in the island, and, under the circumstances, the Government had not thought is advisable to ask him to come to this country to confer with them upon the subject of the proposed Constitutional changes; but it was hoped that in a little time, probably next month, or at all events by the middle of November, cholera would so far abate as to enable the Lieutenant Governor to leave, and come home to confer with the Government as to the draft Constitution. Speaking generally, he might say that the suggestions appeared to be such as the Government might be able to accept, and would receive consideration in the Recess. The views of the Government would be published in Malta in time for an expression of opinion to be given before the next Elections took place about next December.

AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION.

PETITION PRESENTED.

EARL DE LA WARR presented a Petition from members of the Denbighshire and Flintshire Agricultural Society. The Petition pointed out the grievous state in which the agricultural interests of this country were placed by the very low prices that had prevailed for some time. Should that condition continue, a very large proportion of the land of Great Britain would be thrown out of cultivation. The Petitioners also called attention to the fact that 50 per cent of the food of the people was derived from foreign sources, and that in the event of war with any of the Great Naval Powers the food of this country might be raised to famine prices. In conclusion, they prayed that their Lordships would give their serious attention to the condition of agricultural affairs, and expressed a hope that steps would be taken to avert the danger which had been pointed out of land going out of cultivation. He wished to express his entire concurrence with the words of the Petition, and to ask their Lordships' attention to the reasonable views it expressed. He would remind their Lordships that no measure had been passed in the course of this protracted Session with the view of giving any relief to agriculture. He must also add that no attempt, so far as he was aware, had been made by Her Majesty's Government, or by Parliament, to solve the difficult question of foreign and Colonial competition, which was striking a deadly blow at the interests of agriculture. On the contrary, early in the Session the noble Marquess at the head of the Government (the Marquess of Salisbury) stated that he did not entertain any hope of being able to cope with an evil of this kind by any form of legislation. He (Earl De la Warr) ventured to think that the view which was taken in this Petition was in no way akin to the view expressed by the noble Marquess. The Petitioners said, that if it was inadvisable to impose an import duty on foreign produce, it was possible to relieve the agricultural interest of many rates and taxes that now pressed so heavily upon that industry. This surely fell within the scope of legislative action. Notwithstanding the discouraging declaration of Her Majesty's Government, he thought there were unmistakable signs that the country was awakening to the necessity of something being done, and that promptly, to relieve the agricultural interest by a reform of the fiscal system and the incidence of taxation, and by a readjustment of foreign and Colonial tariffs as far as it was possible.

Petition read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at Six o'clock,
till To-morrow, a Quarter
past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 8*th September*, 1887.

MINUTES.] — Select Committee — *Report* — Kitchen and Refreshment Committee [No. 320].

Supply—*considered in Committee*—Navy Estimates, Votes 11 to 17; Army Estimates, Votes 16, 6 to 9, 11 to 15, 17, 18, 20 to 25. *Resolutions* [September 7] *reported.*

Ways and Means—*considered in Committee*—£34,242,209, Consolidated Fund.

Public Bills—*Second Reading* — Superannuation Acts Amendment [354]; Vacant Grounds (Nuisances Prevention) [388].

Committee — Local Government Boundaries* [324]—r.p.; Copyhold Enfranchisement [359]—r.p.

Committee — *Report* — Technical Schools (Scotland)* [358].

Third Reading—Merchant Shipping (Miscellaneous)* [348], and *passed.*

Withdrawn—Juvenile Offenders* [245]; Distressed Unions (Ireland)* [307]; Municipal Regulation (Constabulary, &c.) (Belfast) (*re-comm.*) [291]; Temporary Dwellings (*re-comm.*)* [370].

QUESTIONS.

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BOARD OF TRADE (RAILWAY DEPARTMENT)—LEVEL CROSSINGS.

Mr. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether the Board of Trade has any authority over the Railway Companies in the matter of level crossings; and, if so, whether, in view of the large proportion of fatal accidents connected with railways occurring at level crossings, he will take such steps as are needful to secure the safety of railway servants and the public at these dangerous places?

The SECRETARY (Baron Henry De Worms (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Special powers are, in some cases, conferred upon the Board of Trade by the Private Acts of Parliament authorizing the construction of railways. Powers are also conferred on the Board of Trade by the Railway Clauses Act, 1863, Section 7, to direct a Company to carry the turnpike road or public carriage road either under or over the railway by means of a bridge or arch, instead of crossing the same on the level. This provision only affects level crossings authorized since 1863, and confers no powers with regard to foot-path crossings.

Mr. H. GARDNER asked, whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that a great proportion of railway accidents occurred on level crossings; and whether he did not think that the Board of Trade should apply for further powers in the matter?

Baron HENRY DE WORMS: I am aware that a great many accidents have happened lately at level crossings, and the attention of the Railway Companies has been directed by the Board of Trade to the danger that exists. Further than that, in the present state of the law, the power of the Board does not go.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—MR. QUINN, HEAD MASTER OF THE NATIONAL SCHOOLS, TANDRAGEE.

Sir JAMES CORRY (Armagh, Mid), asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that the headmaster (Mr. Quinn) of the National School, Tandragee, is the correspondent of the Nationalist newspaper, the *Morning News*, of Belfast, and that he attends the Petty Sessions Court during school hours, to report its proceedings to that paper?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, he had to inform his hon. Friend that the Commissioners of National Education had fully investigated the charge against Mr. Quinn, and found there was no ground for it.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—THE "BLUE BOOKS." — LEASEHOLDERS' RENT FIXTURES.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) (for Mr. T. M. Healy) (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Will the Land Commission Blue Books be arranged in future to show leaseholders' rent fixtures separately?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Land Commissioners had informed him that the Blue Books issued by them would show the rents fixed in the cases of leaseholders separately from those fixed for yearly tenants' valuation lists in the Land Commission Court.

LAND COMMISSION COURTS—PRODUCTION OF CERTIFICATES OF VALUATION.

Mr. D. SULLIVAN (Westmeath, S.) (for Mr. T. M. Healy) (Longford, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, as the Land Commission Courts require applicants to produce, at the hearing of their cases, certificates of the valuation of their holdings, to enable them to fix a fair rent, and, as the copies of the valuation lists furnished by the Commissioner of Valuation to clerks of unions do not show the value of land separate from buildings, it is the fact that the correct valuation of such buildings cannot be given in the certificates by clerks of unions; and, whether, therefore, as buildings, as a rule, are in Ireland erected by the tenants, arrangements can be made in the Valuation Office to show the valuation of buildings separately; and, if so, would the Land Commission object to alter their forms accordingly, as the valuation of buildings and of land are now lumped together therein?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Land Commissioners report that the practice which exists of requiring applicants to produce a certificate of valuation of their holding has been adopted for the very purpose of enabling the Court to ascertain how much of the gross Poor Law valuation is on the land and how much on the buildings. The Commissioners believe that the certificate of the Clerk of the Union is but a copy of the valuation furnished by the Valuation Office, Dubblin; and that the valuation books, as furnished to Clerks of Unions, do not distinguish the value of the land from that of the building. To alter the form of originating notice by specifying that the valuation should be that of the land alone would not be, in the opinion of the Commissioners, an advantage; as in such cases, by reason of the trouble of getting the separate valuation in the first instance, the applicants would, in most instances, leave the originating notice incomplete. If the Valuation Office adopts the practice of supplying the information as to the separate valuation of land and buildings, in such case the Land Commissioners would be prepared to make an alteration in the form requiring each to be given, as the information would then be within the reach of applicants. The Commissioner of Valuation states, in another letter, that arrangements can be made at the Valuation Office to issue certificates to all applicants at a small fee, showing the area and valuation of land and the valuation of buildings separately.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—THE "QUEEN *v.* SUB-INSPECTOR SOMERVILLE AND CONSTABLE WARD."

Mr. BLANE (Armagh, S.): asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he has entered a *nolle prosequi* in the case of the "Queen *v.* Sub-Inspector Somerville and Constable Ward?"

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. GIBSON) (Liverpool, Walton): I have to say yes, Sir. It was done at the last Cork Assizes.

BOARD OF WORKS—STOWMARKET COUNTY COURT.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the First Commissioner of Works, If Mr. Fitzgerald, from the Board of Works Office, who visited Stowmarket recently to inquire into the sitting accommodation of the County Court, has made his Report; if it be true that a deputation of tradesmen, consisting of the leading men of the town, waited upon Mr. Fitzgerald to protest against the inadequate provision made for suitors, and recommending that the local Institute Hall be hired; if a Report of the complaints made has been furnished to him, will the same be laid upon the Table of the House; and, if it has been decided to hold all future Courts at the Institute instead of the old Courthouse?

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER (Mr. PLUNKET) (Dublin University): Mr. Fitzgerald did recently visit Stowmarket officially, and while there he was waited upon by an informal deputation of merchants and others, who complained of the inadequate accommodation provided for the County Court in their town, and requested that the local Institute Hall should be hired for the purpose. Mr. Fitzgerald reported to me on the 30th of last month in favour of that suggestion; and I at once applied to the Registrar of the County Court for his opinion upon it. Unless the Registrar should raise any objection, which I do not at all anticipate, the desired change shall be made with as little delay as possible.

MOROCCO—THE SLAVE TRADE.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the reports are correct that the Slave Trade is still active in Morocco and the other towns of that State, and that the slave dealers have quite recently hawked their human victims about the streets, chiefly children and young negresses, offering them for sale; and, whether the Government will use its influence with the Sultan of Morocco to check this practice?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Her Majesty's Government regret that the Slave Trade still exists in Morocco, and that an open market for the disposal of human beings is held twice each week in Morocco city. The presumption, therefore, is that the trade is also active in the Provinces. Her Majesty's Minister has standing instructions to do what he can in discouragement of the practice; but active interference with it is not possible.

METROPOLITAN BOARD OF WORKS—THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY-LE-STRAND.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.,) asked the hon. Member for the Knutsford Division of Cheshire, as representing the Metropolitan Board of Works, Whether the Board propose to remove the church called St. Mary-le-Strand, which so much blocks the way in the Strand, and is understood to be in a dangerous condition? And also a further Question in regard to the payment of compensation.

MR. TATTON EGERTON (Cheshire, Knutsford), in reply, said, that the only action that the Board had taken with regard to the church referred to had been to serve a danger notice on the rector and churchwardens based on the report of the district surveyor, to render the building safe. Some few years ago, several schemes were under the consideration of the Board for widening the Strand at this point, and forming a new communication with Holborn; but no particular plan had been decided upon, and, owing to financial considerations, no action had been taken on the proposals. The Board were not in possession of any facts with regard to the numbers of persons who used the church; and as to the Board making any compensation in the event of the church being done away with, that was rather a matter which would be dealt with in any proposal for widening the Strand.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked, whether it had been considered that, if money was expended in repairing the church, it would be less likely that it would be acquired for widening the street.

MR. TATTON EGERTON said, the question had only been considered generally in the way he had stated in connection with schemes for widening the Strand.

BURIALS ACTS—PROPOSED CEMETERIES IN EAST HAM.

MAJOR BANES (West Ham, E.) asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he is aware that three cemeteries are being projected in East Ham, in defiance of the Local Authorities and the residents, although there are, in the immediate neighbourhood,—namely, West Ham, Manor Park, and Forest Gate, six cemeteries already; whether he will inquire if any necessity exists for these additional cemeteries, and as to the persons by whom they are projected; and, if the proposed cemeteries are found to be unnecessary, whether the Local Government Board has any powers by which the inhabitants of the districts can be protected from the nuisance and depreciation of property which must arise from the opening of new cemeteries in addition to those already existing there?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.) (who replied) said: I have received notice of the projected promotion of two cemeteries in East Ham. I have also received objections to their establishment from local bodies and residents. I understand that there are in the neighbourhood of East Ham numerous cemeteries which afford abundant accommodation for burials. As there is no closing order for East Ham, neither the Home Office nor the Local Government Board have any legal power to prevent the formation of the proposed cemeteries; and, therefore, it is not proposed to hold any Government inquiry into the matter.

MAJOR BANES asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman would consider the circumstances in connection with the Local Government Bill, with a view to the Local Authority having a voice in such a question?

MR. MATTHEWS: Yes; I think it is a question well worthy of consideration.

SOUTH AFRICA—ANNEXATION OF ZULULAND.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he is aware that the Colonial Secretary for Natal is recently reported to have said, in the Legislative Council of that Colony, that

> "It had always been understood that the annexation of Zululand would give the Colony an opportunity of getting rid of a large number of Natives;"

if, in that observation, which appears to have been made in reply to a Motion favourable to the policy of transferring Natives from Natal to Zululand, the Colonial Secretary was rightly interpreting the intentions of the Imperial Government; and if Her Majesty's Government will take care that no regular transference of Natives be allowed to take place, except with the complete and unquestioned assent of the Zulus inhabiting the part of the country to which it may be proposed to move them?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): My attention has not been drawn to the report in question; but it has, undoubtedly, been for some time contemplated that a portion of the Native inhabitants of Natal, who came into the Colony from Zululand, during the troubles in that country and who are now overcrowded would seek to return, and might be accommodated in Zululand. The great necessity, however, of preserving peace and good order in Zululand, will render Her Majesty's Government specially careful not to sanction any scheme of transfer of Natal Natives to Zululand unless there is ample room for them. Any such scheme of transfer would have to be submitted to, and approved by, the Governor of Zululand before it could be carried into effect.

WAR OFFICE (ORDNANCE DEPARTMENT)—ISSUE OF DEFECTIVE AMMUNITION POUCHES.

GENERAL FRASER (Lambeth, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, If he is aware that the pouches issued to a Cavalry regiment, intended to carry 20 rounds of ball ammunition, were found, on a recent occasion, to be of such inferior workmanship as to give way in the stitching in many instances under the weight of only 10 rounds; whether, on the Report of the Commanding Officer upon these pouches (specimens of which were sent with the Report to Woolwich), the whole regiment was supplied with new pouches, which, on being examined and tested by the Commanding Officer, were found to be quite useless, and incapable of holding the ammunition they were intended for; and, whether, on a further Report being made to this effect, the Officer Commanding was ordered to retain these pouches?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter) (who replied) said: Not long since the ammunition pouches of a Cavalry regiment were found of an obsolete pattern, and were exchanged for new ones. The new ones were complained of as being too small to contain the required ammunition. On investigation, it was ascertained that this arose from the cartridges not having been put in the pouches in the manner laid down by regulation. As the same pouch is in general use in Cavalry regiments, and was found, on examination, to be quite serviceable, the regiment in question was directed to retain the supply.

WAR OFFICE (AUXILIARY FORCES)—MILITIA VALISE EQUIPMENT.

GENERAL FRASER (Lambeth, N.) asked the Secretary of State for War, When the Militia will be supplied with the valise equipment in place of the knapsack, the latter having been discarded by the Line 15 years ago?

THE SURVEYOR GENERAL OF ORDNANCE (Mr. NORTHCOTE) (Exeter) (who replied) said: The exchange of the Militia knapsacks for the valise equipment involves considerable expense, and can only be made gradually. About 85,000 have been exchanged; and it is hoped that the condition of the store will allow of good progress being made during the present year.

SCOTLAND—EMIGRATION FROM THE HIGHLANDS.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND (Sutherland) asked the Lord Advocate, What are the intentions of Her Majesty's Government with regard to emigration from the Highlands of Scotland?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): The Government have had under their serious consideration a scheme of crofter and cottar emigration for the Highlands and Islands of Scotland which has been drawn up by the Secretary for Scotland. Some points of difficulty have arisen in the course of the negotiations with regard to the security offered for the payment of the interest demanded on the capital proposed to be advanced by the Government so as to insure the Exchequer against loss. The Secretary for Scotland hopes to overcome this difficulty by obtaining, if possible, a guarantee from Local Authorities, or otherwise, for the additional security required; and if this very desirable object can be attained the Government will be ready to carry out the proposed scheme next Session, and, if necessary, to introduce legislation for the purpose.

MR. A. SUTHERLAND asked the right hon. and learned Gentleman, if his attention had been called to the correspondence between the Foreign Office and the authorities of the United States with regard to the emigration of crofters to the United States of America, and also to a letter which appeared in the correspondence from Messrs. Henderson Brothers?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I am not able to answer the Question at all, except to say, in regard to the answer I have given, it does not relate to any emigration to the United States.

WAR OFFICE—RIDINGMASTERS AND QUARTERMASTERS—PROMOTION FROM THE RANKS.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that Ridingmasters and Quartermasters promoted from the ranks, and with more than 25 years' commissioned service, have, though strongly recommended by their respective Commanding Officers for the rank of major, been recently passed over in favour of officers of seven, 10, and 14 years' service; and, whether there is any, and what, objection to the promotion to the rank of major of officers who have risen from the ranks?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): There is no objection whatever to the promotion of officers who have risen from the ranks to the rank of major, and many cases have occurred in which such promotion has been given. But, as I have already fully explained to the House, it was decided upon the Report of a Committee which inquired into all the alleged grievances of quartermasters, that promotion to the rank of major should not be by seniority, but by selection, to fill some of the more important posts held by these officers.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—RELIEVING OFFICERS OF THE BELFAST POOR LAW UNION.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the relieving officers of Districts Nos. 1 and 2 of the Belfast Poor Law Union are also acting as Assistant Registrars of Births, Marriages, and Deaths in their respective districts in contravention of the General Order of the Local Government Board of the 2nd of August, 1847; and, whether each relieving officer of this union resides within his own district, as directed by the Local Government Board Circular of the 16th of July, 1847?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The relieving officers of Nos. 1 and 2 Districts of Belfast Union act as Assistant Registars of Births, Deaths, and Marriages for Nos. 3 and 4 Registration Districts respectively. The Local Government Board Order of August 2, 1847, has been rescinded. The General Order of December 18, 1882, which is now in force, does not require these officers to devote their whole time to the duties of their office. The Clerk of the Union reports that all the relieving officers live in their respective districts, with one exception—the relieving officer of No. 1 District. The Local Government Board will communicate with the Guardians in reference to the case of this relieving officer.

THE CURRENCY—THE NEW COINAGE.

MR. DILLWYN (Swansea, Town) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If it is true that the authorities at the Mint are issuing sets of the new coins complete, of which the current value is £9 5*s.* 3*d.*, at the price of eleven guineas? Also, when the new 6*d.* coins were likely to be issued?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): A large number of applications were received by the Deputy Master of the Mint for "proof" sets of the coins of the new designs; and it has been usual hitherto, in cases of new coinage, to prepare such "proof" coins and sell them to the public. The Treasury accordingly authorized the Mint to prepare such "proof" sets in the present case. Much additional labour was involved in the preparation of these coins, which had to be struck with great care in the medal presses (not the presses used for the ordinary Jubilee coins); and a charge of about 25 per cent above the nominal value of the coins had to be made to cover the cost of the manufacture of these "proof" sets. The ordinary coins are, as the hon. Member is aware, obtainable through bankers at the nominal price. As to the new 6*d.* coins, they are not being issued any further, on account of the objection raised to them that they may be made to resemble half-sovereigns if they are gilded. But there is a large stock still of old 6*d.* pieces, and also of new 6*d.* pieces available. As to the gold pieces, the last intimation I had from the Mint and from the Bank of England was that there was a considerable stock of all the coins available. I am most anxious that the public should have access to the coins. There is some difficulty in finding the necessary machinery for supplying them; but I will give every facility I can.

EXCISE—THE TOBACCO DUTIES—EXCESS OF MOISTURE.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, N.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that a firm of tobacco manufacturers in the North of Ireland have supplied some of their customers with tobacco containing over 35 per cent of moisture, contrary to the new Customs and Inland Revenue Act, and that influence is being brought to bear to prevent a prosecution; and, whether, if the law is not enforced in this case, other manufacturers will be similarly treated under similar circumstances?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): I am not aware that a firm of tobacco manufacturers in the North of Ireland have supplied some of their customers with tobacco containing over 35 per cent of moisture. I may say, however, that 12 tobacco manufacturers in Ireland have been found to have such tobacco in their possession. All these cases have been treated alike, as have similar cases in England. The manufacturers in question have all received a warning; but it has not been thought necessary as yet to proceed to a prosecution in any case. When laws are passed enacting changes in manufacturing processes, a certain discretion is always exercised in the first month or two before severe measures are adopted. In no case has any influence been brought to bear to prevent prosecution.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say how many of these cases there are in England?

MR. GOSCHEN: The Question referred to Ireland; and, therefore, I made particular inquiries as regards Ireland. If the hon. Gentleman wishes to know how many cases are in England, I will make the necessary inquiries?

THE THAMES CONSERVANCY BOARD—REPRESENTATION IN THIS HOUSE.

MR. GEDGE (Stockport) (for Mr. BAUMANN) (Camberwell, Peckham) asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether he will take into consideration the desirability of nominating to the Thames Conservancy Board a Member of Parliament representing a river-side constituency, there being no representative of the Conservancy in the House of Commons?

THE SECRETARY (Baron HENRY DE WORMS) (Liverpool, East Toxteth): It would, no doubt, at times be of some advantage that the Board of Conservators of the Thames should be represented in the House; but, in view of the provisions of the Thames Conservancy Act, it would be practically impossible to lay down any hard-and-fast rule such as is indicated by the hon. Member.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—REMOVAL OF A BANNER, CAPPAMORE, CO. LIMERICK.

MR. FINUCANE (Limerick, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Cappamore constabulary recently pulled down by force a banneret from the house of Mr. Martin Ryan, Towerhill, County Limerick, on which were the words "Evictors, come on;" whether Mr. Ryan, on same day, expected to be evicted by the Sheriff; and, whether the words on the banneret constitute a breach of the law; and, if not, by whose authority the police acted?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Constabulary Authorities report that on the 25th of August Martin Ryan, who had adopted the Plan of Campaign, was to have been evicted. He had barricaded his house, and in the evening fastened on the outside of the house a piece of calico with the words, "Plan of Campaign;" "Evictors, come on;" "No surrender." The words did constitute a defiance of the law, and were calculated to lead to disorder, breach of the peace, and obstruction to the law. The police sergeant, in the discharge of his duty, properly removed it.

ARMY — MILITARY COLLEGES AND ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—COMPARATIVE SALARIES.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, by paragraph 489b of the Royal Warrant of the 10th June, 1884, the Head Masters of the Royal Military Asylum, Chelsea, and of the Royal Hibernian Military School, Dublin, are to receive £250 per annum on appointment, rising by quinquennial increments of £25 to £350, so that after 20 years' service they should reach the maximum; whether, by the same Warrant, the second and third masters of the Royal Hibernian Military School are to receive £150 on appointment, with biennial increments of £5 to 180, so that after 12 years' service the maximum should be reached; whether the paragraph mentioned was inserted at the instance of Lord Morley's Committee in 1872, to remedy the anomalies and grievances then existing; whether the Head Master of the Royal Military Asylum, Chelsea, has got the full benefit of the Warrant, while the Head Master of the Royal Hibernian Military School has got but one increment, after 41 years' service; whether the second master, Royal Hibernian Military School, has also been given but one increment, though having upwards of 16 years' service, thus receiving less than either the third or fourth masters there, or the second, third, or fourth masters at the Royal Military Asylum; whether all other officials of both establishments have got the benefit of their service; whether this grievance has been repeatedly laid before the War Office Authorities since 1873, endorsed by the Board of Governors of the Royal Hibernian Military School, and hitherto ignored; and, whether payment will be made of the arrears accruing since the 1st April, 1874, when the Warrant took effect, amounting respectively to £165 for the Head Master and £85 for the second master, up to the 1st April, 1887; and, if not, why is the Royal Warrant made effective in every other case, both as to military and civilian officials, and not with reference to these?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who replied) said: The masters of the Royal Hibernian Military School referred to in the Question had, according to their years of service, received the full benefit of the Warrant.

MR. SEXTON: In consequence of the unsatisfactory answer of the hon. Gentleman, I shall call the attention of the House to the hardships endured by these officials when the proper Vote comes on.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT— ASSISTANTS OF EXCISE.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he is aware that much dissatisfaction exists amongst the junior officers of Inland Revenue, owing to slowness of promotion and consequent loss of salary; whether their complaints have become more urgent in consequence of the scheme of re-organization which took effect on the 1st September instant, and which entails the abolition of a large number of appointments in the higher grades of the Service, thereby injuriously affecting promotion; whether, with reference to a statement made in this House by a Member of the Government on 12th April, 1886, that assistants of Excise attained the rank of ride officer after about five years' service, there are at present many assistants of almost seven years' service, whilst others, at the ordinary rate of promotion, cannot expect to attain the rank of ride officer until after nine or 10 years' service; whether, in the recent re-arrangement of salaries, assistants of long service have received no practical acknowledgment of their claims; and, whether, with a view to allay the prevailing discontent, and maintain the efficiency of an important branch of the Revenue Service, the Government propose giving any compensation to those whose prospects have been injured, and who are suffering the disadvantage of deferred promotion?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): The statement made on the 12th of April, 1886, conveyed the facts as they then were. It was, however found, on a recent revision of the Excise Establishment, that, owing to a large diminution in the number of brewers, a less number of officers was required for the service of the Revenue than formerly. This led to the re-organization which took effect on the 1st instant, by which the number of stations to which assistants would be promoted was reduced. As a set-off against this unavoidable disadvantage, the Treasury sanctioned an increase of salary being given to the assistants after three years' service, and another after six years'. In the re-arrangement of salaries a small advantage was given to assistants of long standing. The reduction in the staff was the result of altered circumstances; and the best compensation was given to officers for deferred promotion that those circumstances allowed, due regard being had to economy of administration. In estimating the effect of the recent re-organization upon the prospects of assistants, it must be remembered that if the places to which they can be promoted are fewer under the new system, the salaries of those places are higher.

PRISONS (ENGLAND AND WALES)— LADY VISITORS TO FEMALE PRISONERS.

SIR RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcestershire, Evesham) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether Her Majesty's Commissioners of Prisons are taking any measures for the systematic extension of the voluntary visitation of female prisoners by ladies, under such arrangements as are admittedly working so satisfactory at Oxford, Worcester, and one or two other gaols?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Mr. MATTHEWS) (Birmingham, E.): Yes, Sir; the system is being extended by the Prison Commissioners as far as they are able. When an application is received for the appointment of lady visitor, the name is submitted for the approval of the Commissioners; and written instructions are then forwarded to her, in order that her benevolent functions, the value of which is fully recognized, may be carried into effect in the most systematic and useful manner, and with the co-operation of the Prison Authorities.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES—FISHERMEN PILOTS.

SIR SAVILE CROSSLEY (Suffolk, Lowestoft) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether he is aware that the fishermen pilots on the cruisers detailed for the protection of the drift fishing boats on the North Sea, were last year insufficiently paid by the Government, and that the boat owners were obliged, at their own expense, to augment the pilots' pay considerably in order to obtain the services of efficient men; and whether the Government will supply fishermen pilots for these cruisers in the coming fishing season at their own expense?

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON)(Middlesex, Ealing): Until the hon. Baronet put the Question on the Paper my attention had not been directed to this matter. As the Government are most desirous to co-operate with the fishermen in protecting them against the depredations to which they are now subject, I will make arrangements by which the remuneration given to fishermen pilots last year by the Admiralty shall be augmented.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES—THE PROTECTION CRUISERS.

SIR SAVILE CROSSLEY (Suffolk, Lowestoft) asked the First Lord of the Admiralty, Whether the Government will endeavour to replace such of the cruisers detailed for the protection of drifters in the North Sea as are obsolete by other cruisers, of an improved class like H.M.S. *Hearty?*

THE FIRST LORD (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): As the cruisers become unfitted for the service on which they are engaged they will be replaced by efficient vessels; but I cannot undertake to say that they shall be of the same class as the *Hearty*, as the replacements must depend on the vessels at the disposal of the Admiralty at the time.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES — DAMAGES BY BELGIAN TRAWLERS.

SIR SAVILE CROSSLEY (Suffolk, Lowestoft) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether in view of the fact that no adequate compensation has been obtained in any case, by either private individuals or Trade Societies, from the owners of Belgian trawlers wilfully damaging British drift fishing, the Government will take up the first clear case arising, on behalf of the owner of the injured English boat, and will carry the case through, and see that justice is obtained?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): In consequence of many allegations that the existing means of obtaining compensation for wilful damage to their property are not readily accessible in Belgium to British fishermen, Her Majesty's Government have instructed the Consul General in Belgium to take legal advice, and assist the aggrieved parties to bring a civil action in a test case in which criminality has been proved.

NORTH SEA FISHERIES—THE OSTEND RIOTERS.

SIR SAVILE CROSSLEY (Suffolk, Lowestoft) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government has yet received the Report of Her Majesty's Consul General at Antwerp, who was sent to Ostend to report fully on the case of the *Morning Star*, the owner of which lost a considerable sum by not being able to land fish, or communicate with his agent, at Ostend on the 23rd August, and on other similar cases; and, whether he will take such steps as are necessary to secure compensation for British subjects who have suffered losses from Ostend rioters?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Mr. Grattan was sent to Ostend to report generally on the whole question of the fishery riots, and on the case of each individual British vessel which suffered in consequence of them. His general Report has not yet been received; but he has reported the result of his inquiries into the case of the *Morning Star.* This vessel, it appears, entered Ostend Harbour on the morning of the 24th—not the 23rd. Her captain employed two boatmen to make his vessel fast to the dock wall. From them he learned what had happened, and they advised him to put to sea. He spoke to the Sluice Master, who alleges that he merely confirmed the statements of the men as to the general state of affairs. The Sluice Master was then asked by the captain as to procuring a tug, and he replied that at that early hour one was not procurable; but he asked the pilot of the English steamship *Medley*, which was about to leave, to tow the *Morning Star* out, which was done. The Sluice Master emphatically denied having advised or ordered the master of the *Morning Star* to quit the port. As regards compensation to British subjects who have suffered losses from the Ostend rioters, it appears that such claims should be addressed to the Municipality of Ostend. Her Majesty's Consular officers will be instructed to give such assistance as may be necessary to persons having cause to prefer them.

INDIA (BOMBAY)—CHARGES AGAINST MR. G. H. D. WILSON, OF THE COVENANTED CIVIL SERVICE.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Under Secretary of State for India, Whether Mr. G. H. D. Wilson, of the Covenanted Civil Service of India, and late Political Agent of Cambay, was accused of having demanded the daughter of the Dewan of Cambay as a concubine; whether a Commission composed of two of the most experienced Members of the Indian Civil Service, Mr. J. G. Moore and the Hon. J. R. Naylor, was appointed by the Government of Bombay to make inquiry into this charge; whether, after a public investigation, both parties being represented by leading counsel of the Bombay Bar, the Commissioners found that the charge had been proved; whether their decision was upheld by the Government of Bombay; whether Viscount Cross has reversed this decision; and, if so, upon what grounds; whether Mr. Wilson is not to return to India; and, whether he is to be allowed to resign on a special pension; if so, what is the amount of this pension, under what Statute is it granted, and, will the people of India have to pay it?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): I have to reply to this Question on behalf of my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for India, who is still indisposed. The facts stated in the first three Questions are substantially correct. The Government of Bombay expressed concurrence in the finding of the Commissioners, but referred the matter to the Secretary of State, and postponed the issue of final orders until the proceedings had been considered by him. On the receipt of the Papers at the India Office the case was, in the first instance, referred by the Secretary of State to a Special Committee of his Council, which considered the evidence altogether insufficient to support the finding of the Commissioners in India. The Secretary of State, after careful consideration, came to the same conclusion; but recognizing the importance of the case, was anxious to obtain the independent opinion of high legal authority, and the whole of the Papers were accordingly laid before the Lord Chancellor. After attentive examination of them, he unhesitatingly gave his opinion that Mr. Wilson was entitled to an acquittal; and this view being in accordance with that of the Secretary of State and of the Indian Council, it was adopted. For reasons explained in the Secretary of State's despatch to the Government of Bombay, which will shortly be published in India, it was not thought desirable that Mr. Wilson should return to India. A retiring allowance will be granted to him; but its amount cannot now be stated, because before this could be determined a reference to the Government of Bombay was found necessary. The principle, however, on which it will be regulated is that it will fall short of the annuity to which he would have been entitled on the completion of the ordinary term of service by an amount proportionate to the time by which his actual service is deficient.

MR. PICKERSGILL asked, under what section of the Civil Servic Pensions Code pensions were granted?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON said, he was unable to answer the Question; but he might say that the pensions were made up out of contributions by members of the Civil Service from their pay, amounting to about two-thirds of the total amount; and Mr. Wilson's pension would, therefore, be less in proportion to the time by which it would fall short of his full term of service.

MR. PICKERSGILL wished to know whether there was any section of the Civil Service Pensions Code which was applicable to such a case as this?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON asked the hon. Gentleman to give Notice of the Question, which was not one relating to his own Department.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—ATTACK ON A TRAIN, KILLYLEA STATION, CO. ARMAGH.

MR. BLANE (Armagh, S.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, on Sunday 4th September, an Orange mob made an attack on the passengers in the train at Killylea Station, County Armagh, with bludgeons and volleys of stones, as well as revolver shots; whether the County Inspector was written to the previous evening, warning him as to the intentions of the Orange party to attack the train; and, what steps the Resident Magistrate and County Inspector took to preserve the passengers at Killylea?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Constabulary Authorities report that a party of Nationalists returning by train from a meeting at Middletown, County Armagh, while passing Killylea Station, which is essentially an Orange district, made use of party cries. This gave offence to some persons on the platform at the time, and resulted in stone-throwing and the use of sticks by both parties. There was no firing, except one shot from the train while leaving the station. A letter had been sent by a Mr. Gardner to Mr. Dobbyn, County Inspector, who happened to be on leave of absence. But as there was nothing to show it was not a private letter it was forwarded to him unopened. No special steps were taken for the preservation of the peace, as there was no disturbance anticipated. The Nationalists appear to have been altogether responsible for what occurred. Several complaints have been made as to their discharging revolvers and otherwise creating disturbances when returning by rail and cars from the meeting. In one instance a bullet cut through a boy's boot, grazing the skin and lodging in the heel of the boot, but, fortunately, without doing him further injury.

WAR OFFICE—UNCLAIMED EFFECTS OF DECEASED SOLDIERS.

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.) asked the Financial Secretary to the War Office, If he can explain the circumstances under which the delay of nine months has arisen in paying to his legal representatives the amount of the effects of the late John Collins (Fleming) of the 2nd Battalion, Somerset Regiment, who met his death in Burmah in December of last year; and, whether the largeness of the sums of unclaimed effects of soldiers is due in any measure to the avoidable delays which take place in the realisation and distribution of them?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford): Great delay has arisen in making up the non-effective accounts of soldiers who have died in Burmah, and especially in the battalion referred to, in consequence of the very detached duties on which the troops were employed, coupled with the fact that their kits were left for the most part at Rangoon when the battalions moved up country. No instance is known of the relatives of a deceased soldier abandoning their claim upon his effects in consequence of delay in paying the money; and no case is added to the list of unclaimed effects until every effort has been made to discover the relatives entitled to the amount. I may add that the Secretary of State is always most desirous to distribute these estates with the least possible delay.

CIVIL SERVICE WRITERS—PROMOTION TO LOWER DIVISION CLERKSHIPS.

SIR JOHN PULESTON (Devonport) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he is now in a position to communicate to the House the decision of the Treasury regarding the promotion of Civil Service writers to Lower Division clerkships; and, if not, whether he will be able to do so before the Session closes?

THE SECRETARY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): As I have stated, in answer to former Questions on this subject, the recommendations made by Departments are being considered by a Committee. The work is not yet complete, and I fear I may not be able before the close of the Session to make an announcement respecting the promotions to be made; but I shall make the promotions as soon as the work is complete.

VENEZUELA—OUTRAGES ON BRITISH SUBJECTS AND SHIPPING — THE "HENRIETTA" AND "JOSEPHINE."

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he has received any information of a further outrage, committed by Venezuelan authorities, upon British merchants residing in the adjoining Colony of Trinidad; whether a lighter, belonging to Mr. John Cumming, one of the principal British merchants at Port of Spain, Trinidad, despatched with monthly supplies only for his estate and hospital at Cedros, also in Trinidad, driven by squally weather into Venezuelan waters while beating up the coast, and, anchoring there, waiting for turn of tide to get back to the Trinidad shore, was seized by the Venezuelan Revenue boat, and taken, with the crew, as prisoners, to Giuria, where, although proof was given of the innocent nature and facts of the case, the Venezuelan authorities procured judgment to be given against the vessel, gave 48 hours only to appeal, and condemned the captain to three months' imprisonment; whether the former outrages committed by Venezuela by the seizure, ill-treatment, and false imprisonment of the passengers and crews of the *Henrietta* and *Josephine,* and their vessels, which outrages were also accompanied by a gross perversion of justice, under the name of a judgment, are still unredressed, and the claims and remonstrances made by Her Majesty's Government therefore are still unheeded; and, whether, in face of the contemptuous indifference shown to these claims and remonstrances, and the further outrages committed and threatened by Venezuela upon British subjects, Her Majesty's Government will take steps to enforce respect to its demands and to protect the Colonists and their property from similar outrages in future, or whether the Colonists must, in case of future assaults upon or seizure of their persons or property, defend themselves or secure other assistance?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): Information has reached Her Majesty's Government of the seizure referred to in the Question, which will receive immediate attention; but there has not yet been time to examine the circumstances of the case. In the meanwhile, one of Her Majesty's ships has arrived at Trinidad, having been summoned by the Governor of the island. No redress has yet been given by the Venezuelan Government in the cases of the *Henrietta* and *Josephine;* but Her Majesty's Government cannot allow matters to remain on that footing.

PIERS AND HARBOURS (IRELAND)—BALLYCOTTON HARBOUR.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Why the portion of the old Pier at Ballycotton that projects into the new harbour has not been removed and the foundation made level with the bottom of the harbour on either side; whether he is aware that as much as four feet of this portion of the old pier still remains which is exposed at low water spring tide, and constitutes an obstruction dangerous to shipping; whether it is a fact that, while the new pier was in course of construction, tons of rubble—namely, stones, earth, and rubbish, were blown off the new pier into the harbour, forming a bank of rubble alongside the pier, which prevents fishing boats lying within a distance of 20 feet from the wall, whereas formerly fishing boats were able to reach and lie beside the old pier at half tide; and, whether the Board of Works will order the entire removal of the portion of the old pier referred to, and the dredging of the rubble, which is dangerous, and robs the new pier of half its value?

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.) (who replied) said: I learn by telegram that this work is still in the hands of the contractor, who is bound to remove altogether the portion of the old pier which projects into the new harbour; and he will also be obliged to remove any rubble, stones, earth, or rubbish which may have been allowed to fall into the harbour.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CHARGE AGAINST A POLICE SERGEANT, PIKE, BALLINGARRY, CO. TIPPERARY.

Dr. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) (for Mr. P. J. O'Brien) (Tipperary, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any Report has been received with reference to the sergeant in charge of the police station at Pike, County of Tipperary, having been drunk on the evening of the 30th June last when absent on duty at Lorrha Petty Sessions; and, if not, will he cause inquiry to be made into the fact?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, this Question had been repeatedly asked, and he had inquiries instituted. He had received a Report from the District Inspector, from which it appeared that the sergeant, who was a most zealous and efficient officer, had earned the hostility of the local branch of the National League. The District Inspector was himself present at the Petty Sessions, and said there was no ground for the allegation contained in the Question.

Dr. FOX: The man is regularly drunk.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE GREENWICH TIME GUN AT CORK.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Postmaster General, Whether complaints have reached him of the irregularity in firing the Greenwich time gun on the Marina, in the City of Cork; and, whether some arrangement could be made to insure that the gun should be fired punctually at noon, as in other ports? I would also ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether this gun had not really become the laughing stock of the city, exhibiting what I may call wilful eccentricity in sometimes going off for weeks, and then not going off at all?

The POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. Raikes) (Cambridge University): In reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to state that no complaint has reached me of irregularity in the firing of the time gun on the Marina at Cork. No arrangement has been made with this Department for the supply of the Greenwich time signal at noon. At the request of the Harbour Commissioners the signal is supplied daily at 10 o'clock, and the Commissioners, I am informed, make their own arrangements for firing the gun at 1 o'clock. Therefore, the Post Office is not responsible for any irregularities that may occur at that hour. The signal cannot be supplied to any Provincial town at noon; but if it is the wish of the Commissioners that it should be supplied to Cork at 1 o'clock, as at some other places, I shall be glad to receive an application from them on the subject.

CENTRAL ASIA—THE DELIMITATION OF THE AFGHAN FRONTIER.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is a fact that the frontier between Turcomania and Afghanistan has been so delimitated as to leave all the fords on the Pendjeh, Murgab, &c., used by the nomadic pastoral tribes, in the hands of the Russians?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): No, Sir, it is not a fact; and I may say that in the hon. Member's Question there are names which I do not recognize. There is no river called the Pendjeh on any map I have seen, nor is there any place called Turcomania. It may have some relation to Mervousness.

Dr. TANNER: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether Turcoman-land is not placed on most maps as "Turcomania?"—the land of the Turcomans? He may not be aware of it; but——

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

HOME OFFICE—INCORPORATION OF HASLINGDEN.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.) asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the Petition for the incorporation of Haslingden was presented; whether it was signed by a large majority of the inhabitant ratepayers, representing about two-thirds of the net rateable valuation; whether any cause operates against the grant of the Charter; whether an inquiry has been held; and, if so, whether a Copy of the Report of the Commissioners will be laid upon the Table of the House; and, whether, if no inquiry has been held, an inquiry will now be ordered?

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. Matthews) (Birmingham, E.): A Petition for the incorporation of Haslingden was presented at the Privy Council Office on the 20th of November, 1886. It was signed by persons representing about a half of the net rateable valuation. The inhabitants of a portion of the district objected to the grant of a Charter, and expressed a wish to be joined to Accrington. An inquiry was held, by direction of the Lords of the Council, on the 15th of February last. The Reports of the Commissioners are confidential documents, and it has never been the practice to make them public.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he will lay upon the Table the Papers regarding the compensations for loss of office in the Transvaal, showing the grounds on which they were awarded, and also the grounds on which subsequent offers of service were declined?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir HENRY HOLLAND) (Hampstead): Sir William Gurdon's Report, to which I referred for particulars of these cases last Tuesday night, was confidential, and I therefore only offered to show it to the hon. Member; but I will send him extracts from it which bear upon the question of these pensions, and I hope this will satisfy him. But if he should desire any further information, and will let me know, I will endeavour to give it to him.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—RETIREMENT OF MR. W. AHERN, NORTHERN POSTAL DIVISION.

MR. H. CAMPBELL (Fermanagh, S.) asked the Postmaster General, Whether it has come to his knowledge that Mr. Walter Ahern, the Surveyor of the Northern Postal Division of Ireland, is about to seek retirement on pension; if so, upon what grounds, what is his present length of service, and what will be the probable amount of pension to which he will be entitled; whether it is a fact that he has only retained his present position as surveyor for about six years; whether there is any limit of age for candidates applying for vacant surveyorships; and, if not, will he consider the advisability of fixing the limit of age for applicants not to exceed 40 or 45 years, so as to insure that the appointment will fall to a man of sufficient energy, who will not seek it for the purpose of retiring a few years subsequent to its being conferred upon him on the increased pension which retirement from the position entails; and, whether he will consider the question of transferring the present headquarters of the Northern Division from Dublin, which is 45 miles beyond the southern limit of that district, to a more central point in the Division?

THE POSTMASTER GENERAL (Mr. RAIKES) (Cambridge University): I have no knowledge whatever of Mr. Ahern's intentions. He has about 38 years' service. The other question will receive consideration whenever the occasion arises.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W,) asked if it was the fact, as stated in the Question, that the headquarters of the Northern Division were in Dublin?

MR. RAIKES said, there was no doubt that the present headquarters of the Northern Division were in Dublin. He would, as he had said, consider the question of their transference when the occasion arose.

INLAND NAVIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRELAND)—THE RIVER BARROW.

MR. W. A. MACDONALD (Queen's Co., Ossory) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in reference to the sum of £5,000 voted by Parliament towards the drainage of the River Barrow, Whether the Government intend to bring forward legislation dealing with the subject of the drainage; whether that legislation will be introduced next Session; and, if so, at what period of the Session; and, whether the legislation will proceed on the lines suggested by the Royal Commission, and particularly whether effect will be given to the recommendation of the Commission that a free grant of £75,000 shall be made for the purpose of the proposed drainage?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said, the Government did intend to introduce a Bill dealing with the Barrow drainage next Session. The Bill would be based generally on the lines suggested by the Royal Commission. The Government were not prepared to give any promise in regard to a free grant of any or a special sum. They would not be in a position to do so until they had before them the Reports of the Royal Commission on other questions besides arterial drainage which had been referred to them. The Bill would deal with the recommendations of the Commissioners as a whole.

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS III. — LAW AND JUSTICE—"CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS, REPAYMENTS TO COUNTIES AND BOROUGHS."

Mr. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether there is any Treasury Minute, or other Regulation, which limits the annual Vote for "Criminal Prosecutions, Repayments to Counties and Boroughs;" and, if so, what is the date, and what are the terms of such Minute?

The SECRETARY (Mr. Jackson) (Leeds, N.): The repayment of the costs of criminal prosecutions is now regulated —subject to the Resolution of this House in Committee of Supply and to the terms of the Appropriation Act—by Treasury Minute of January 29, 1875, which deals with the "costs of prosecutions at Assizes and Sessions and under the Summary Statutes," the latter being at that time the Criminal Justice and Juvenile Offenders Acts.

CRIME AND OUTRAGE (IRELAND)—DISTURBANCES AT BALLINASLOE.

Dr. FOX (King's Co., Tullamore) (for Mr. Harris) (Galway, E.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the statements contained in the extract from *The Daily News*, as to recent occurrences in Ballinasloe, be substantially true; whether the following statements correctly describe what took place:—

> "At half-past 10 o'clock on Friday last the police arrested a man for drunkenness. A few people assembled and shouted, as the police treated the prisoner very roughly. On the road, opposite John Rigney's house, Louis Ward's two sons, Tom and Louis, were walking. The police had gone to the barrack, and save a few shouts from the children, nothing was occurring, when Constable Nolan, by himself, walked up behind Louis Ward's back and struck him on the head with his baton a blow which was heard 40 yards away, and which felled him to the ground. The constable then ran away. Young Ward was taken home insensible, and attended by Dr. De La Hunt, who pronounced him suffering from concussion. The crowd was so quiet, that when told to disperse they did so. Tom Ward charged Constable Nolan with the assault to Sergeant Charles M'Carthy, but he took no notice whatever of what occurred, and did not even go to see the injured man;"

and, if so, what action, if any, has been taken by the Local Authorities as regards the conduct of Constable Nolan and Sergeant M'Carthy?

The PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel King-Harman) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The County Inspector of Constabulary reports that on Saturday evening, September 3, a prisoner had been sent from Ballinasloe to Galway, and that a disorderly mob had collected on the platform cheering the prisoner and groaning at the Government. Afterwards, about 10.30 p.m., when the police were conveying a drunken man to the barrack, a mob of between 100 and 150 roughs collected round them hooting and groaning. One of the police, Constable Nolan, observed Ward stoop and take up from the ground what appeared to be a stone. He called on him to drop the stone; but instead of doing so he made a motion with his hand to throw it at him. The constable stooped his head to avoid the missile, and struck at Ward with his baton in self-defence. Ward's skull does not appear to have been fractured. The constable did not run away. He rejoined his party to render them assistance in conveying the prisoner. Mr. Gibson, Resident Magistrate, was present, and considers the police displayed great forbearance.

Dr. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Arising out of the answer, may I ask how it could be known that Ward had a missile—is it a supposition or a reality?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: Considering it was 10.30 p.m., it would be rather difficult to see in the dark.

Dr. TANNER: If this young man was not in possession of a stone, and no stone was thrown, and yet his skull was fractured, was it not most unwarrantable and illegal?

Colonel KING-HARMAN: They say his skull was not fractured.

Dr. TANNER: But his head was broken.

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, order!

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—PROCEEDINGS ON THE SHIRLEY ESTATE, CO. MONAGHAN.

Mr. P. O'BRIEN (Monaghan, N.) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord

Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that the tenants on the estate of Mr. Shirley, in the neighbourhood of Carrickmacross, County Monaghan, who were evicted last March, and who retook possession of their houses pending the hearing of their applications to the Land Court to have a fair rent fixed, have been recently visited by the police, and by them threatened that unless they quitted their homes within two days they would be proceeded against under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act; whether he can state upon whose authority, and under what Statute, the police so acted; whether it was open to Mr. Shirley to remove these people under the ordinary law; and, whether, in view of the fact that their applications to have a fair rent fixed are listed for hearing at the next sitting of the Land Court in County Monaghan, he will order the police to suspend their action?

THE PARLIAMENTARY UNDER SECRETARY (Colonel KING-HARMAN) (Kent, Isle of Thanet) (who replied) said: The Constabulary Authorities report that 14 tenants on the Shirley estate, evicted last September, December, and March, have been noticed by the police to leave the houses and farms where possession had been unlawfully re-taken within the last few days; and in some cases, when found in the houses, were informed that if they did not leave they would be prosecuted under the Statute quoted. These instructions were carried out by order of the Divisional Magistrate. Mr. Shirley might have taken proceedings to recover the premises otherwise than by means of the recent Statute. None of these tenants have served notice to have a fair rent fixed; and in the case of seven of them the statutable period for doing so appears to have expired.

TITHE — COMMUTATION AND REDEMPTION OF TITHE — A ROYAL COMMISSION — COLLECTION OF TITHE RENT-CHARGE.

MR. H. GARDNER (Essex, Saffron Walden) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether Her Majesty's Government have given any consideration as to the desirability of appointing a Royal Commission on the Commutation and Redemption of Tithe?

MR. J. G. TALBOT (Oxford University) also asked the right hon. Gentleman, Whether, considering the urgent necessity of settling the questions which have arisen with respect to the collection of tithe rent-charge, as instanced by the recent Report of the Commissioner appointed to investigate the disturbances in Wales, he will consider the desirability of recommending the appointment of a Royal Commission, which may facilitate the early passing of a measure calculated to determine a matter of grave importance to the well-being of the community?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): In answer to the Questions of the two hon. Members, I beg to state that Her Majesty's Government have given further and careful consideration to the question of tithe; but they have come to the conclusion that, under present circumstances, it is not desirable that a Royal Commission to inquire into the question should be appointed.

WAR OFFICE — PRESENTATION OF COLOURS TO THE 5TH BATTALION ROYAL MUNSTER FUSILIERS — RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, S.W., Bootle) had the following Question on the Paper:—To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is a fact that, on the 24th ultimo, at the Curragh Camp, on the occasion of the presentation of new colours to the 5th (Militia) Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers by the Marchioness of Londonderry, wife of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, the regiment having been formed up into square on parade, the Service of Consecration of the Colours, taken from a Romanist book called *The Pontificale Romanum*, was performed by a Roman Catholic Priest named Father Dillon, assisted by the Senior Anglican Military Chaplain in Ireland; whether it is the case that, on the occasion of Consecration of Colours of one of Her Majesty's Regiments by a Roman Catholic Priest at Devonport last year, a severe reprimand to all concerned was administered by the then Secretary of State for War, on behalf of Her Majesty's Government; whether the celebration of Romish ceremonies in public is in accordance with the provisions of 10 *Geo.* IV. c. 7 s. 26; and, what course Her Majesty's Government propose to take in the matter?

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): As Question 48 is exceedingly offensive to millions of Her Majesty's subjects, and as the hon. and gallant Gentleman in whose name it stands is not here to ask it, I beg to ask your leave to put it to the Secretary of State for War, in order that we may have an expression of opinion from the Government regarding the matter.

The SECRETARY of STATE (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I am quite ready to answer the Question. It is the fact that on the day named the Marchioness of Londonderry presented Colours to the 5th Battalion of the Royal Munster Fusiliers, being the regiment formerly known as the Dublin County Militia. The ceremony of consecrating the Colours took place, consisting in the reading of two collects in English by the Roman Catholic chaplain, followed by the prescribed prayers for the blessing of standards by the Church of England chaplain. The regiment is mainly composed of Roman Catholics; and it was considered desirable that the chaplains of both denominations should co-operate in the ceremony. The ceremony appears to have satisfied everyone on the spot, and was not in any way similar to the one which took place last year at Devonport.

Mr. SEXTON: I wish to ask you, Mr. Speaker, whether it is in Order, or respectful to Her Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects, to speak of and to use the expression "Romish ceremonies," which appears in the third paragraph of the Question?

Mr. SPEAKER: I did not take any exception to the expression when I first saw it, nor do I think that any exception can be taken to it now. I do not suppose that any insult to any Member of this House was for a moment intended.

Mr. SEXTON: We consider it extremely offensive.

Mr. SPEAKER: With that knowledge, I shall take care in future that Questions are so framed as not to offend the prejudices and feelings—very just feelings—of hon. Members.

LOCAL TAXATION RETURNS, SCOTLAND.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he can give any hopes that the Local Taxation Returns of Scotland will no longer be kept back by the Secretary for Scotland?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): The Local Taxation Returns of Scotland for the past year, as the hon. and gallant Member has already been informed, are being pushed forward as rapidly as the limited staff at the disposal of the Secretary for Scotland will permit.

AFGHANISTAN—AYOUB KHAN.

Sir ALGERNON BORTHWICK (Kensington, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Ayoub Khan, having recently escaped from his detention in Persia, attempted to enter Afghan territory in the neighbourhood of Herat; whether he was repulsed in the attempt; whether he is now a fugitive on Persian territory; and, whether any steps will be taken to effect his recapture?

The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE (Sir James Fergusson) (Manchester, N.E.): The information that Her Majesty's Government have received is in the sense of my hon. Friend's Question. I cannot at present add anything to it.

THE TRUCK BILL—THE WAGE CLAUSES.

Mr. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he received a telegram this morning from the Trades Union Congress at Swansea protesting against the action of the other House in striking out the Wage Clauses of the Truck Bill with regard to Scotland and Ireland?

The FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. Smith) (Strand, Westminster): Yes, Sir; I did receive such a telegram.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman, whether the Government attach any importance to the communication, and whether they will consider the subject?

Mr. W. H. SMITH: Undoubtedly, Sir; the Government will consider the subject.

THE SOUTHERN PACIFIC—SAMOA.

Mr. A. M'ARTHUR (Leicester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for

Foreign Affairs a Question of which I have given him private Notice. It is, whether any confirmation has been received of the telegraphic news published this morning that the Germans have occupied Samoa?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE (Sir JAMES FERGUSSON) (Manchester, N.E.): A telegram, which I am sorry I have not got with me, has been received stating that, in consequence of complaints which the German Government had against the so-called King Malietoa, a force had been landed and he had been deposed. The British and United States Consuls had protested. I should add that the rival Chief has been recognized by the Germans as King of Samoa.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): Is it not a fact that, practically speaking, owing to the German Colonists in Samoa having been attacked by one King, the Germans have set up a rival King, and that the English Consul has actually stated to the people of the Island that the English Government will resist this German aggression, and will re-instate the former King?

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON: I must ask the hon. Member to give Notice of the Question; but I must not be understood to admit the truth of anything he has said.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — VALUATION OF LANDS (SCOTLAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What the Government intended to do with regard to the Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Amendment Bill?

THE FIRST LORD (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster) said, it was the intention of the Government to push that Bill through. As the hon. Baronet would see, the Bill had come down from the other House, and it was much more important that other measures which had not passed the House of Lords should be taken before it.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

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SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) £553,300, New Works, Buildings, Yard Machinery, and Repairs.

(2.) £56,100, Medicines and Medical Stores.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): There are one or two points in connection with this Vote which ought to receive the attention of the Committee. In the first place, I think there is nothing which really deserves more consideration than the quality of the medicines and drugs which are supplied to the Navy. I find, comparing the medicines supplied to the Navy with those supplied to the hospitals and to private practitioners, that, as a rule, they are of far inferior quality both in the naval hospitals and on board Her Majesty's ships. I have seen several of the large naval hospitals, and have experienced much pleasure in going over them. As a rule, they are well managed and maintained in an extremely efficient manner, except in regard to contracts for medicine. It is very hard that I should feel called upon to inveigh against any system of Government contracts; but, as a private individual, having gone through these hospitals and visited several of Her Majesty's ships, I am prepared to say that the standard of the medicine and drugs supplied to the Navy is much inferior to that which is supplied to the large hospitals in London and in the Provinces. I am of opinion that if there was a little investigation into the system, both as to the character of the medicines supplied and the cost of the supply, it would be advantageous to the public. I am certain that much better articles might be obtained at a more reasonable cost. Perhaps I may be allowed to accentuate what I say by pointing to the "German" quinine now kept in store, the price of which fluctuates in the market and varies very greatly. Of course, the supply is very limited. As everybody knows, it is grown in South America; and if there is a sudden epidemic and an increased demand the price at once goes up in the market. Some of the items of expenditure in connection with this Vote have, I believe, over and over again been brought before the House, and it has been complained that the buying of perishable drugs in large quantities has led to great waste; they become damaged, and in the end have to be sold at a very trifling price, although they have cost a good deal to obtain at first hand. In the case of quinine, it is a very expensive article, and I think it is altogether undesirable to lay in a large stock of such substances, and thereby run the risk of the deterioration to which they must obviously be subjected. I would ask the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford), in whose Department I believe this matter rests, to bear these points in mind. I only mention the fact because I want, in a straightforward manner, to stop the waste of public money which goes on in connection with these items. Having mentioned the question upon this Vote, there is no necessity why I should allude to it again in connection with the Army Vote, although, of course, the same principle is involved there. Instead of laying in a large stock of these perishable drugs, I think it would be a great deal better to come to some arrangement or agreement with some of the large firms to undertake to supply the Government in the event of an emergency. There is another matter to which I desire to call attention, and which, I believe, comes under this Vote. My hon. Friend the Member for West Aberdeenshire (Dr. Farquharson), who has usually called attention to the matter, is not at present in his place, and therefore I consider it my duty to mention it. At any rate, I think we are entitled to an explanation upon it, although I am not so well informed on the matter as my hon. Friend. I allude to the expense of carrying out the Contagious Diseases Act. That Act has now been abolished in this country, owing to the philanthropic efforts of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld).

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member that there is no item in connection with the Contagious Diseases Act in this year's Vote. There was last year, but there is not this.

DR. TANNER: I thought the item applied to this year. I saw an entry in the Vote; but as there is no specific item this year, I will confine myself to the point I have already brought before the Committee. It is a strictly technical medical subject; but I have considered it my duty to bring it under the notice of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (A LORD of the ADMIRALTY) (Marylebone, E.): The subject which the hon. Gentleman has mentioned is, no doubt, a very important one; but I can assure him that the greatest possible care is taken to get drugs and medicines of the very best quality.

DR. TANNER: May I point out to the noble and gallant Lord one point in connection with the matter? I think one fact is worth a thousand mere assertions. I have visited a great number of Her Majesty's ships of war, and among others, on one occasion, I went over a vessel commanded, I think, by the noble and gallant Lord—namely, the *Devastation*—[Lord CHARLES BERESFORD: No.]—I recollect finding on that ship, and also upon others upon several occasions, "German" quinine, which was of a very inferior quality. I happened to see it in the case of the *Devastation* upon one of the shelves. It was evidently in use, and I put some questions to one of the medical officers with regard to it. Of course, for obvious reasons, I have no desire to mention names. I complained of the inferior quality of the drugs, and I was told—"Oh, we cannot get anything better out of the Government."

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I am very sorry to hear that; but, as far as we can, we take the greatest trouble to obtain the best medicines and drugs we can secure. The hon. Member spoke of cutting down the supply of drugs. I do not think that he would really wish to do that. I think it is most necessary that we should always have a full supply, and that we should always be able to obtain what we require. Formerly, I admit, in the system of issuing drugs and stores there was a certain amount of waste; but that was owing to a bad system of organization. Medical stores were bought more or less by wholesale, and they were not divided into separate stores for the different ships; that was a system which was attended by a great deal of waste. At the present moment, however, a different system prevails; and now, in regard to all medical stores, both at home and abroad, there are certain chests always ready packed in the event of an emergency. In that case, when stores are required, it is only necessary to hoist the chests into the ship, the chests themselves having already been packed in a time of peace. So far as the quinine is concerned, I believe that we get the very best. I will, however, make inquiries with reference to what has fallen from the hon. Gentleman. I may inform him that I never was on board the *Devastation.*

DR. TANNER: I made a mistake; I meant the *Thunderer.*

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): I am very glad that the hon. Member has raised this question about quinine; but he has overlooked the supply from India. I think it would be extremely valuable if the Government would make some further inquiry in regard to all stores supplied by contract. It is now 16 years since I served on the Select Committee to inquire into the contracts and purchase of stores, and the time has come for renewing the inquiry.

SIR JOHN PULESTON (Devonport): I take it that although the immediate question of the Contagious Diseases Act mentioned by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Cork cannot be discussed upon this Vote, yet that the appropriation of a certain amount of money already voted in connection with that Act is involved in the present Vote. I see an item in reference to my own constituency—namely, the Royal Hospital at Devonport—and certainly an appropriation for that purpose is involved in this Vote. Therefore, I think I shall not be out of Order in asking my noble Friend to make some inquiry into the practical working of the system now adopted under this appropriation. My own belief is that the system is not working satisfactorily, and I would ask my noble Friend whether something cannot be done to make it work better?

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I am sorry I am unable to give my hon. Friend any information. I was not aware that any question with regard to the working of the Contagious Diseases Act was likely to be raised.

DR. TANNER: There is one other matter which comes under this Vote—namely, the surgical instruments supplied to the medical officers of the Navy. I think the noble Lord would do a very great service to the medical officers if, on the arrival of a vessel after a voyage, these instruments were taken out of a ship, and transmitted to some instrument maker in order to have them thoroughly done up, in the same way in which the surgical instruments are done up, which are used in the hospitals on shore. That would not only be a very good thing for the medical officers themselves, but I think I am entitled to urge it on the plea of economy; because if these surgical instruments are kept in an efficient condition their deterioration is prevented, and they are prevented from rusting and going to the bad. Not only would the Government save expense, but I think they would be advancing, at any rate, the cause of humanity; because it now very frequently happens that the medical officers of the Navy are called upon to perform most delicate operations with inadequate instruments, or with instruments that are altogether out of order. Certainly, that is entirely opposed to the true instincts of humanity. I am satisfied that a small point of this nature might very easily be seen to; and although it might entail a small immediate expenditure it would be for the benefit of everybody concerned in the end.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I am afraid it would be very difficult to send out the surgical instruments after every voyage; but certainly, when a ship is paid off, the rule is to return the surgical instruments into store. They are then thoroughly done up according to a contract made by the Board of Admiralty, and returned to the ship when put into proper condition.

DR. TANNER: I am afraid that I did not thoroughly explain what I mean. There are many surgical instruments made of steel used at sea, and they are more liable to rust than similar instruments which are kept on shore. It is for that reason that I would suggest the desirability of having them carefully attended to whenever an opportunity arises.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I am afraid that we could not do that until the vessel comes home, and is paid off. When a ship does come home its surgical instruments are sent to the hospital, and are re-done up by contract.

Vote *agreed to.*

(3.) £11,500, Martial Law, &c.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £186,100, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of various Miscellaneous Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888."

Colonel BLUNDELL (Lancashire, S.W., Ince): I wish to ask the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty whether, when iron-clads become unfit for sea service and it is proposed to break them up, the question is considered if, instead of destroying them, they might not be used for the protection of mercantile ports at home, and in the Colonies as floating batteries? The early floating batteries, such as the old *Glatton,* would have been very useful for such purposes.

The FIRST LORD of the ADMIRALTY (Lord George Hamilton) (Middlesex, Ealing): As a matter of fact, I do not believe that any of our iron-clads have as yet been broken up. We have made arrangements by which certain iron-clads which are not considered to be effective for sea-going purposes will be sent to foreign stations, where they will be used as a sort of reserve ships for the protection of the station in which they are placed.

Sir JOHN PULESTON (Devonport): I wish to call attention to a small item which appears in this Vote of £650, as a contribution in aid of the Lock Hospital, and the Lock Wards in the Devonport Hospital. I only draw attention to the item because it is quite evident that the question of the Contagious Diseases Act does come under this subsection of the Vote, the item being a contribution on the part of the State in aid of the Lock Wards of the Devonport Hospital. I think that if the Government will make some inquiry into the matter they will be able to find a better mode of carrying out the intentions of the Act than has as yet been discovered. Passing from that subject, I wish to call attention to a small item of £650 for sailors' homes at the naval stations. When we consider the number of our sailors' homes, and the important work they have to do, and even the increasing importance of the work, I would venture to express my regret at the smallness of the sum appropriated for that purpose. I do not think that the public money could be expended in a manner that is calculated to do more good to the Naval Service. I am quite sure that if the Admiralty will look into the question they will arrive at the conclusion that a small additional amount may be employed in this direction.

Dr. TANNER (Cork, Co., Mid): It is a pleasant thing to be able to corroborate any statement that comes from the Benches opposite; but this is a case in which I am quite prepared to back up the appeal which has been made by the hon. Member for Devonport (Sir John Puleston). I think we are entitled to ask the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty to direct his attention to this question. It is a subject which I myself mentioned last year, particularly in connection with the Cork Sailors' Home. Upon that occasion the hon. Member for the borough of Cambridge (Mr. Penrose-Fitzgerald) said that there was a project on foot in Cork to amalgamate the Queenstown and the Cork Sailors' Homes. I recollect that I put the state of the case before the noble Lord at that time at considerable length. I do not feel called upon to treat it at the same length this year; but I would ask his kind indulgence to the circumstances of the case. There is one home at Cork and another at Queenstown. Of course, the home at Queenstown is quite close to the ships, and the noble Lord the First Lord must be aware that when there is a sailors' home immediately opposite a guard ship, many men pass from the ship every day and enter their names on the books of the home. That, however, means nothing whatever. They simply go in and out, perhaps wash their hands or have a cup of tea, but never make use of the home in a regular way. I was secretary to the Cork Sailors' Home for nearly three years, and at the present moment I happen to hold a sort of honorary position in connection with it. Therefore I speak with some kind of authority in regard to the Sailors' Home at Cork; and I trust that the noble Lord will perceive that I am simply endeavouring to direct his attention to the necessity which actually exists, if any regard is to be had to the benefit of the sailors themselves—not merely seamen in Her Majesty's Service, but of sea-faring men. I made an appeal last year to the noble Lord to look into this matter, and to consider that these sailors' homes are not merely for the benefit of Her Majesty's seamen, but also for the benefit of other sailors, many of whom come from foreign countries who happen to be turned adrift as waifs and strays upon any of our sea-port towns. In Ireland at the present time we have not a superfluity of wealth. Any man who will take the trouble to read the newspapers will see the rapid strides that pauperism is making in the country. It is, therefore, evident that unless some substantial support is given to institutions of this kind by the authorities that the institutions themselves cannot be continued. It is therefore desirable, in a period like the present, that we should make an appeal to Her Majesty's Government. As the hon. Member for Devonport (Sir John Puleston) pointed out, Her Majesty's Government ought to do something more for the support of these sailors' homes than they have done in the past. In the first instance, the Government granted to our home in Cork a sum of £25. They found that the home was managed so well that they increased the grant to £50, subsequently to £75, and then to £100. What have the Government done since? It is perfectly evident that in times of depression like this, if the Government took away their grant, the charity must suffer; and, nevertheless, the Government now propose to cut down their grant by one-half. Were it not for the fact that from time to time we have had very liberal endowments in the City of Cork from private individuals we should have been obliged to close the Sailors' Home. An effort has been made—as I stated last year—to amalgamate the Cork and Queenstown Sailors' Homes; but I think that it would be a great mistake. Queenstown is not a commercial port. The Board of Trade Office, where the sailors go in order to get their certificates, and to find a new ship, is not at Queenstown, but at Cork. The consequence is that Cork is the centre, and where you have a centre I think it is palpable you ought to have the home. The Sailors' Home at Cork has been successful in the past. We have continued to keep the doors open; but we are looking forward with a certain amount of alarm to a long period of depression. We are now steadily eating into our capital, and if that is to go on the home cannot be kept open much longer. Every year we have had a large number of men stopping there who do not come simply for the purpose of washing their hands, but who come for the purpose of occupying the home. Last Christmas we had about 400 men who came from Bantry, and who were connected with the Navy or the Coast Guard. Men of that kind have come in and filled our home on two or three occasions in the course of the year, and whenever we have the Channel Fleet in Bantry Bay we have a large number of them. I only draw the attention of the noble Lord to the fact that what he promised last year has not been carried out. Speaking on this side of the House, I will only ask him to comply with the appeal which has been made to him by the hon. Gentleman on the opposite side—namely, to pay attention to these most deserving charities. I trust that he will, at any rate, allow some investigation to be made into the circumstances of the two homes I have mentioned.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The principle on which this Vote is distributed is this. The grants are made to sailors' homes in proportion to the use made of them by the sailors of the Navy and the facilities they afford. That is the only principle on which grants of this kind can be included in the Navy Votes. I quite agree with the hon. Gentleman that few institutions are more worthy of public support; but if sailors' homes are to receive public support on any other ground, money will have to be asked for, not by the Admiralty, but by the Board of Trade on behalf of the Mercantile Marine of the country. The hon. Member for Mid Cork (Dr. Tanner) has called attention to the sums appropriated for sailors' homes last year, especially in reference to the homes in Cork and Queenstown. On that occasion I said that it was found that the sailors of the Fleet made greater use of the home at Queenstown than they did of that at Cork, and that accounted for the difference between the two grants. The hon. Gentleman on that occasion took exception to the manner in which the money was distributed. I subsequently looked into the matter, and I can assure the hon. Member that a very great use indeed is made of the Sailors' Home in Queenstown, much more than of that at Cork. We have, therefore, felt it necessary to adhere to the principle in which the grants were previously given.

DR. TANNER: Will the noble Lord say whether the question of the amalgamation of the two homes is to be considered? I have made inquiries, and I cannot find that any steps have been taken in the matter.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I believe that it is probable that the two homes may be usefully amalgamated; but that is a matter for the local managers, and is not a matter in which the Admiralty can possibly interfere.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I have a Motion on the Paper in respect of Item 10 of this Vote, and before allowing the Vote to be taken I must certainly ask Her Majesty's Government to give me some specific information upon this matter. Even if they do so, it is highly probable that I shall press the matter to a Division. The item in question has reference to the conveyance by sea of the Royal Household, and the entertainment of Royal personages. There are a variety of other items under the same heading with which I do not desire to trouble the Committee. I refer to the fact because it has not been possible for me, in placing the Amendment upon the Paper, to ascertain and to discriminate greatly between the amount required for these two first purposes—the conveyance of the Royal Household, and the entertainment of Royal personages, and the amount for all other purposes under letter Z. I would, therefore, ask the noble Lord in charge of the Vote to explain to the Committee, in the first instance, what is the exact amount required for the conveyance by sea of the Royal Household; and, secondly, for the entertainment of Royal personages? That is the first question I shall put to the Government. But following upon that I certainly take a very strong exception to our being called upon to vote money for this purpose at all. With respect to the first head, my objection to it is precisely similar to the objection I raised the other evening to the payment of £40 for a steam packet whenever a distinguished personage or some near relative of the Royal Family chooses to come or go across the English Channel. If we must have a Royal Household, assuredly we pay enough for the maintenance of the dignity and of the splendour of the Court when we pay the Royal Family a round sum amounting to nearly £1,000,000. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] But it is a fact; and if Her Majesty cannot pay the travelling expenses of her household and servants out of a sum of £385,000 which is granted annually for her Civil List, I do not see why the country should be called upon to pay them. Last year we voted to the Sovereign alone a sum of £410,000, and surely that ought to be enough to enable the Sovereign to pay the travelling expenses of her household. I should like to know why it is not? If it is necessary to increase the Civil List for that purpose, then by all means let the Government move that the Civil List be increased; but I am inclined to think that the people of this country entertain a strong objection to increasing it. What I object to is these subsidiary payments being constantly asked for, for precisely the same reason which I gave the other evening, that a large proportion of the electorate of this country consider that we have already paid a great deal too much. What I would ask is whether this money is paid under the contract by which the country bound themselves when the Civil List was established in its present form at the commencement of Her Majesty's Reign? Being bound by that contract, of course I have no objection to make to the continuance of the payment; but what the people of this country have a reasonable right to complain of is that this sum—very much too large, as many of us think—should be year after year supplemented by payments none the less objectionable because they may, perhaps be small and comparatively insignificant. There are very strong complaints, and the most uncomplimentary language is used out-of-doors with respect to the Royal Family, because the people think that it is hard, considering the amount of the Civil List, that we should be constantly called upon to pay the travelling expenses of the Royal Household and the Royal Family. I can only repeat what I said the other evening—that if the Government of this country are desirous of maintaining the dignity of the Royal Family and of securing the respect of the people for Royal institutions, it is very desirable indeed that these demands upon the public purse by persons living in luxury and splendour should be put a stop to at once and for ever. As far as I am concerned, I have no reason to complain of the operation of these arrangements year after year, because, from my point of view, as a Republican, I have no objection to their being clearly known, seeing that they must be calculated, in the end, to diminish the popular view of loyalty to the Crown. But that is not the ground on which we, as political partizans, should consider a matter of this kind. We desire, at any rate, to save the pockets of the taxpayers in the first instance, and to spare them from these unnecessary and wholly undignified calls upon the public purse by persons who ought to be above making such calls. In the second place, we desire that institutions which are considered of great importance, and are looked upon with very different feelings by the vast proportion of the people of the country, should not be daily and improperly undermined by considerations arising from these petty matters. We have, therefore, a strong objection to being called upon to pay for the carriage by sea of the Royal Household. If we are called upon to do that, why should we not also be called upon to pay for the conveyance of the Royal Household by land? Perhaps we are; and I hope the Government will be able to explain under what Vote we are called upon to convey the Royal Household to and from Balmoral and other places. So far as the conveyance by sea of the Royal Household is concerned, seeing that Her Majesty has several grand yachts, for which we pay a large sum year by year, I think it is not too much to ask that the Royal Household should be conveyed in them. We are paying annually considerable sums for the redecoration of these Royal yachts, and it is probable that the vessels themselves are not used more than once a month. In my opinion, it is absurd that we should be called upon for extra payments for Royal yachts which are lying idle during a great portion of the year. Then, again, why are we called upon to pay for the entertainment of Royal personages? I wish to know specifically whether this entertainment had anything to do with the Jubilee year, or was it in connection with something that took place last year? Who are the Royal personages, and why should we be called upon to entertain them? Are they connected with our own Royal Family, or are they mere tinsel German Grand Dukes and Duchesses and the rest of them. Surely it is not too much to ask the Royal Family to entertain these Royal personages themselves. We are not supposed to entertain them. When they come over here we may give them a banquet at the Mansion House, or something of that kind; but that is not entertainment. If we convey them at the cost of the nation, why should we be called upon to entertain them? I am very anxious to know who these Royal personages are, under what circumstances they come here, and for what reason Her Majesty's Government asks us to pay even one farthing for their entertainment? I want to know what proportion of the Vote is devoted to the two purposes I have mentioned, and should also like to hear whether similar items are reproduced year after year? Are we called upon to entertain Royal personages every year, or is this the first time, or is the amount we are asked to pay greater this year, or less than in previous years? These are the reasons which have induced me to place an Amendment on the Paper, and I will only repeat my earnest protest against the country being called upon to pay these charges in future. Of course, the Government cannot eliminate these charges from the present Estimates; but I trust that they will consult the popular feeling out-of-doors, if not for their own sake, at any rate in the interests of others.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member move?

MR. CONYBEARE: Yes, I move to reduce the Vote by the sum of £3,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item Z—Miscellaneous Payments and Allowances—be reduced by the sum of £3,000."—(*Mr. Conybeare.*)

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The amount of this Vote is £8,355, and the hon. Member has stated that he is unable to ascertain what proportion of the Vote relates to conveyance by sea, and what for the entertainment of Royal personages. He has, therefore, moved to reduce it by the sum of £3,000. The hon. Gentleman has given expression to his opinions in strong language; but I think that when a Member does feel strongly on any subject he ought to endeavour to obtain all the information he can in regard to it. The hon. Gentleman might have found an explanation of the facts in the Estimates. It is stated that the expenditure incurred in 1885-6, under the head to which the hon. Gentleman has referred, was £1,488, while the hon. Gentleman might have found that out before putting an Amendment on the Paper which implies that the amount voted to these purposes is much larger.

Mr. CONYBEARE: Is that the sum expended for the conveyance of the Royal Household?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: No; it is the sum expended in reference to the Royal Household, and for the entertainment of the suites of Royal personages. The hon. Gentleman says that there are many people in this country who object to the expense attached to the Monarchy and to the Royal Family. Of course, there are a large number of persons among the electorate who are not very well informed upon these matters; and if they adopt the system of multiplication which their instructors adopt, it is not to be wondered at that they over-estimate the cost of maintaining the Royal Family. The hon. Member has put down at the sum upwards of £1,000,000 a-year.

Mr. CONYBEARE: I put down that sum for the whole of the Royal Family. I did not say that it was for Her Majesty alone.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I do not think it amounts to one-half of that sum. Moreover, Her Majesty, as the hon. Gentleman well knows, gave up her right to the Crown Lands, to which she was as much entitled as any private individual to his own private property. I must remind the hon. Gentleman that it has been established by experience that the most expensive Government is the Republican Government.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): Is the noble Lord speaking to the Question?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I might have called "Order" when the hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall was speaking; but I refrained from doing so. After the observations which have been made by the hon. Member I think I had fairly a right to say what I have said. As regards the actual sum itself, it is expended in conveying Her Majesty's servants, luggage, and carriages to and from Aberdeen, and from this country to the Continent, and the amount in the present Estimate for this purpose seems to me to be a reasonable one. The Sovereign of this country, from time immemorial, has a right to have these services performed by the Royal Navy. The hon. Member says—"Why not employ the Royal yachts?" But I may point out to him that the consumption of coal by the Royal yachts would be far more expensive. We cannot, at the commencement of the year, exactly estimate what the cost would be. Therefore we take the expenditure of the preceding years, and that for 1885-6 was the amount which we calculate will be required for the present year—namely, a sum slightly under £1,500. That is the estimate of the amount we have put down as likely to be defrayed in the course of the present year. The hon. Gentleman complains of another item for the entertainment of Royal personages. This is an item which has escaped our attention. It would appear that some portion of the Vote goes for the purpose of entertaining Royal personages from abroad. That is not the case, although the hon. Gentleman has fallen into a natural error. The Royal yachts are frequently employed in conveying Royal personages to and from this country. These Royal personages are accompanied by considerable suites, and they have to be entertained on board the Royal yachts. It has been the practice, and I think properly, to make allowances for this, so as to enable the officers of the Royal and other yachts to defray the expenses to which they are put. The sum charged is a very trifling one, and I think the country may legitimately be called upon to pay it. I think I have now explained to the hon. Member what these items mean, and I have shown him that the employment of the Royal yachts would lead to a very considerable additional expenditure. I have also pointed out that the Sovereign has a right to claim the services which are rendered in this way by the Navy. Therefore I hope the hon. Member will withdraw his Amendment.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I would suggest to my hon. Friend the Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall that, as this is Her Majesty's Jubilee Year, and as we have been gratified with the sight of a great many Royal personages, great and small, he should not feel it necessary to press the Amendment. There is one question I should like to ask the noble Lord—namely, whether I am to understand from him that ships of war are employed to take down the Royal Household and their luggage?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Certainly not. All I said was that from time immemorial the Sovereign had the right of making use of the Royal Navy for that purpose.

MR. HOWELL (Bethnal Green, N.E.): There was one sentence in the remarks of the noble Lord which I must take exception to. I altogether deny that the Crown Lands to which he referred are the private property of the Sovereign, in the sense in which land is the property of private individuals. I think the expression used by the noble Lord was wrongly used.

MR. CONYBEARE: I must say one word in answer to the noble Lord. His explanation has rather intensified my objection than otherwise. He has not said a single word to justify this expenditure, or to remove the necessity for pressing the Amendment as strongly as possible. It now appears that the Royal personages are not Royal personages at all, but the hangers-on and camp followers of Royal personages who come over here in the Royal yachts. [*A laugh.*] The noble Lord laughs, as I think he well may, when he finds that the nation is called upon to bear all this expense. It is quite enough that the poor people of this country should be subjected to the unnecessary expense of entertaining Royal personages; but it is ten times more objectionable that they should have to pay for all these understrappers when they come over. If these Royal personages cannot entertain their own poor, and if they are too impoverished to give this entertainment in the mess-room of the Royal yachts, they ought to stay at home and not burden us with their presence at all. I feel so strongly that the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty has made the matter worse instead of better that I shall not hesitate to press the Motion to a Division. I challenge the noble Lord to show any Act of Parliament or distinct arrangement which justifies these subsidiary payments we are called upon to make in addition to the Civil List. The Civil List was settled at the commencement of the Reign, in order to cover all the expenses which could be imagined. The Civil List is taken, as everybody knows who has read the history of the matter, at the commencement of the Reign. The present Civil List was arranged and settled by a Select Committee, which sat at the end of the Reign of William IV., and everybody knows that the amounts allowed for the Civil List under each of the different heads into which the Civil List is subdivided are enormously in excess of what any reasonable person could ever have wanted. If that is so, and the Civil List is so much in excess of the requirements, we have even more strong reason to complain of these payments, which bring up the amount we have to pay to Her Majesty in the present year to £410,000. So far as the Crown Lands are concerned, I challenge the noble Lord to disprove my statement on the matter. This is what I commit myself to, and nothing more—that the amount, including payments, annuities, and marriage gifts to the Royal Family, very largely exceeds £500,000. If I am not entirely mistaken, we shall have to pay something like £800,000 this year, which is the minimum sum at which it can be put for the Royal Family, including not merely Her Majesty alone, but the whole of the Members of the Royal Family. I quite agree with my hon. Friend the Member for Bethnal Green (Mr. Howell) as to the fallacy of talking of the Crown Lands as belonging to Her Majesty. There were formerly charged upon hereditary revenue, which, we are told, was given up in exchange for the Civil List, large sums in connection with the Government of the country. For instance, the Judges and the Diplomatic Service, and other things, were paid for out of the hereditary revenues, and they are absolutely in excess of the sums now paid. I do not suggest, as an alternative to our being called upon to pay these charges, what the noble Lord says would be a more expensive charge. It seems to me that the Royal yachts might be more usefully employed, considering the amount of money we have to pay for them. At the same time, I do not think we ought to be called upon to pay a single farthing under this head. I maintain that Her Majesty ought to pay for her Royal yachts herself, and that we ought not to be called upon to pay one farthing for the conveyance by sea of the Royal Household, or for the entertainment of Royal personages. We are fairly entitled to object that any item of that kind should appear in the Estimates. I am very glad of the admission the noble Lord made that there was a little mistake in the matter which had escaped the attention even of the Board of Admiralty. I think it throws a side light upon the question that may enable us to fix the attention of the country upon these Royal abuses. I trust that we may detect a few more of these little errors; I have no doubt that we shall if this sort of expenditure is to be continued.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I only rise for the purpose of saying one word. The hon. Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall has again referred to figures which are seriously inaccurate, and he has not attempted to support them by any specific statement. I wish to enter my protest against the practice of making assertions of a haphazard kind in this House which cannot be supported by facts.

MR. CONYBEARE rose to continue the discussion, when——

THE CHAIRMAN: It would be quite irregular at this moment to enter into statistical details.

MR. BRADLAUGH (Northampton): May I point out that discussions of this kind might be avoided if an explanatory Memorandum were attached to the Votes showing the total charge under all headings? By that means any inaccuracy of statement would be prevented. I have taken out all the items with very great care; and I should be inclined—if this were the proper time and place, which it is certainly not—to make a statement, strongly sustaining the amount objected to by the First Lord of the Treasury. In future this sort of discussion can be easily avoided by giving a Memorandum stating what the items are.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff): Many hon. Members of this House are anxious to cut down some of the extraneous charges which find their way into the Admiralty accounts; but I think it would be unfair to the Committee generally to force them into a Division on this point. What is the question before the Committee? It is that the Admiralty should be recouped in a sum of £1,400 for services performed by the Navy. It would be quite unworthy of this country when naval services have ben performed to send in a bill to Her Majesty or anybody else after these Royal personages have been put ashore. I quite sympathize, however, with my hon. Friend the Member for the Camborne Division of Cornwall, and I shall be willing to vote with him on a future occasion if he will move reductions in such Votes in some other direction. I think it is discreditable that a great many charges for persons, not much connected with Royalty, and not having any great claims on the nation, should be made; and therefore I shall be glad to vote with my hon. Friend on another occasion for the reduction of some of these charges. I think it would be well if the Government themselves could see their way to reduce some of these charges. This, however, is not a case of the kind. This is a case of minor services performed by Her Majesty's ships in a small way, and it would be quite a mistake to divide the Committee upon the subject. There is no principle involved in the Amendment, and the Committee could not be forced to divide upon it without the suspicion arising of its being done from "sheer nastiness." It is said that part of this charge is on account of foreign visitors. I hope it will never be said of this country in its corporate capacity that it does not show hospitality. If Great Britain were to become a Republic to-morrow, it would be the duty of the country to show hospitality to the Sovereigns of other countries. I myself, in my humble capacity, have enjoyed hospitality on board the ships of foreign nations, and have spent many very agreeable days. I think it would be hard to throw upon the officers of these ships the cost of the slight entertainment which I received. There are many charges which might legitimately be dispensed with; but in doing so we must not run the risk of holding ourselves up to foreign nations as an inhospitable and unpleasant people, because I maintain that under any form of government, whether it is a Republic or a Monarchy, it is the duty of a nation to extend hospitality to other nations.

MR. CONYBEARE: I am perfectly ready, after the very frank and decided speech of my hon. Friend who has just sat down, to withdraw the Motion, or, at any rate, not to press it to a Division. In doing so, I wish to say that I take that course owing to the arguments which have been laid before the Committee, and because I see that the object

I have in view may be much better accomplished in another way. The best course, undoubtedly, will be to raise the whole question in a much more decided manner another Session, when we come to discuss the Civil List. I should prefer that some more experienced Member of the House would take up the running; but, if nobody else will do so, I shall be prepared to do the duty myself. I wish, however, to guard against a misconception, I thought I had satisfactorily explained in my previous remarks—that if these Royal personages were national guests I should have no objection to the cost of their entertainment. I quite endorse everything that has fallen from my hon. Friend; but I did not understand that these were national guests—on the contrary, I look upon them as mere private guests of the Royal Family, and on that ground I certainly object strongly to these charges.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(5.) £801,400, Half Pay, Reserved Half-Pay, and Retired Pay to Officers of the Navy and Marines.

COLONEL HAMILTON (Southwark, Rotherhithe): I wish to call attention to one item in this Vote—namely, the salary of an officer which has been raised during the year from £500 to £1,000. The same officer also receives an extra sum of money to which he is entitled as half-pay. I think it is very unusual in any branch of the Service to make arrangements of this kind; and I wish to know whether the officer in question receives £1,000 for all his services, or £1,228?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): It is quite true that Captain Hall's salary was raised last year; but he has done valuable work for it—work in which the Board took very much interest, and he occupies now a highly responsible post as the head of the Naval Intelligence Department. The hon. and gallant Gentleman asks if it is true that this officer draws half pay. It has been proposed that he should draw his half pay, and at the present moment there is a correspondence going on with the Treasury upon the subject, and I can give no information with regard to it until that correspondence is concluded.

COLONEL HAMILTON: Is it proposed to allow half pay, not only to this officer, but to the other nine half-pay officers of the Department?

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I shall have some remarks to make as to the form of these Estimates, either on the Report of Supply, or on the Appropriation Bill. I would ask the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty to consider whether something may not be done to render the details of the Vote more intelligible. At present all sorts of officers are mixed up, and it is impossible, without a great deal of trouble, to find out what each different class of officers costs the country. I see that we are voting a sum of £8,000 for half-pay to the Clerical Staff of the Navy, and £5,080 for reserve and retired pay to the same class. Altogether I calculate there is a sum of something like £62,000 for the Clerical Department of the Fleet, the Clerical Staff of the Dockyards being excluded. The total for clerical duties in the Navy is nearly £500,000. I would, therefore, ask the noble Lord to consider the Civil branches of the Navy, and to have their ranks and pay set out in some separate form. As the Estimates are now prepared, it is extremely difficult, if not altogether impossible, to ascertain what the total charge of the Clerical Department or any other particular branch of the Navy is.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I hope next year to lay the Estimates before the House in a different and in an improved shape. My hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Forwood) has already given great attention to the subject; and I agree with my hon. and gallant Friend that it would be better, if possible, to distinguish the Votes for the combatant from those for the non-combatant officers.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): I am prepared to give the Admiralty full credit for their good intentions; but I wish to know whether, when a retired Marine officer or a retired naval officer is employed in the Civil Department of the Navy, or in any other branch of the Civil or Colonial Service, he is allowed full pay of the Civil Office and retired pay as well? That is a question which has often been raised in this House, but has never yet been satisfactorily settled. The same observation applies to the Army as to the Navy.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I also wish to say one or two words in reference to the same question. It is a very large question to raise now at this period of the Session; but from all I can learn the retirement which has been going on in the Royal Navy is most expensive and unjust to the taxpayers of this country. I know of one case in which a man of 36 has been allowed to retire on a pension of £200 a-year. With 18 or 20 years' service, young men in the prime of life are able to go off with a large retiring allowance. I object to the system altogether, as being unjust and unfair to the taxpayers. By the courtesy of the Treasury I have been allowed to see a draft of the Superannuation Bill, which is now upon the Order Book; but I find that it does not deal with this subject except to a very limited extent. I am glad, however, to find that the rules with regard to retirement allowances, both in the Army and Navy, are under the consideration of the Government. I do not at all grudge the payment of a retirement allowance when a public servant is compelled to leave the Service; but what I object to is that these young men, whose services might be rendered available in other ways, are allowed to retire for life with a large allowance. I think, myself, that the country ought to have some hold over their future services, and that it should be in a position to take advantage of those services in a case of emergency. I believe that there are a very large number of retired officers receiving this retired pay; and I want to know if rules exist, or are going to be made, by which the services of retired officers can be made available in future? I do not think that they ought to be allowed to commute their half-pay, and to retire from the country with the full value of their pensions.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The hon. Gentleman has raised two questions. First, the conditions under which officers are to retire, or to accept other employment. Now, the Treasury have considered and, I believe, have laid down very clear rules on that point which, speaking roughly, amount to this—that no officer who receives retiring pay, and performs other duties, shall receive as a total emolument more than the salary which attaches to the duties of the office he is called upon to perform. The hon. Gentleman has made some observations upon the large amount of retiring pay the country is called upon to expend; and he seemed to think that the country had made a very bad bargain with the persons who have retired. That, however, is not the view which is generally taken. I have been looking into the matter, and it does not appear to me that there is any injustice at all. On the contrary, I think that the individuals who are retired have a greater right to complain than the country. What regulates the retirement from the Navy is the Order in Council of 1870. The number of lieutenants whom it is necessary for the purposes of the Navy to keep on the establishments is such that their prospect of promotion is very bad indeed. Of every nine lieutenants who are on the Active List only two can be promoted. Every single one of the officers who retires only receives his retired pay on the understanding that he is liable for service; and recently the Admiralty has sent round to ascertain how many are ready to volunteer in case of emergency, and, with scarcely an exception, all these officers are available. Arrangements have been made by which officers ordered for service shall undergo a course of training, so as to make them thoroughly acquainted with modern requirements. In 1869-70 the amount voted for half-pay was £230,000; but last year it was only £81,000. But, although the amount voted for retired pay in 1869-70 was £253,000, last year it amounted to £665,000, so that, while there was a large reduction in half-pay, there has been a very large increase in retired pay.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: And a very large increase on the whole.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No; not a very large increase on the whole. No doubt, it is a question which the Admiralty will be bound to consider sooner or later. Of course, it is the object of the Government to reduce, as far as possible, the non-effective list.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: The noble Lord tells us that this question will have to be considered sooner or later. I am sorry to say that he has given us to understand that the Admiralty will consider it later, whereas I, myself, should have preferred to see it considered sooner. The Government seem to lay too much stress on the question of promotion. They appear to think that the Army and Navy were made for the men, and not the men for the Services. Upon that ground I altogether disagree with the views of the noble Lord, and I certainly do not think it is necessary to retire these men in the prime of life, in order to keep up the flow of promotion. However, it is quite impossible, at this time of the Session, to discuss satisfactorily this very large and broad subject.

CAPTAIN COLOMB: Will the noble Lord be prepared to tell me, on the Report of Supply, what the total amount of reserve pay and of retired pay is, and what is the addition charged under those heads to persons who are in the receipt of salaries for the performance of other duties?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I think there will be no difficulty in getting at the consolidated pay.

Vote *agreed to.*

(6.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £906,800, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Expense of Military Pensions and Allowances, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888."

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Upon this Vote I wish to call the attention of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty to the case of the widow and orphans of Patrick Cooper, who, while serving in the Navy, as an assistant engineer, in 1884, twice sustained injuries, dying five months after the last injuries were sustained. The medical certificate stated that his death was accelerated by the injuries he had received while in the service of the Queen. The Admiralty Regulations provide, I think, that if injuries are received which result in death while a man is in the Service his widow and orphans are entitled to consideration at the hands of the Department. Therefore I submit that this case fell within the Admiralty Regulations, and if not within the letter of them, certainly it fell within the spirit. No doubt, the man was obliged to retire from the Service in consequence of the injuries he received, and there can be no doubt that his untimely death resulted from those injuries. Patrick Cooper left a widow and seven children. When I was last in Belfast I made some inquiries into the case, and I ascertained that it is an extremely hard one. Five of the children are under seven years of age, and the mother has been left without any means of support. At the time of his death Cooper had a long-service medal and a good-conduct medal, for which, however, he had never received anything. During the three years which have elapsed since the death of Cooper his widow and children have not received a single penny, in the shape either of pension, gratuity, or compassionate allowance. Cooper was an Irishman. I do not know whether that accounts for the difficulty in securing any satisfactory consideration of his case; but I think it is most undesirable to treat in this spirit the widow and children of a man who has served his country well, and thus to implant in the minds of Irishmen the painful feeling which must be aroused by the facts of a case like this coming to their knowledge. I have spoken to numerous persons about the case, without reference to politics, and in every instance a feeling of disgust has been expressed at the conduct of the Government. I divided the Committee on this case last year, and I intend to take a Division upon it every year as long as I remain in the House—so long as justice is not done. Probably, some day or other, justice will be done in the matter. I certainly cannot agree with the Government that the widow and orphans of a man who has served the country so long should be left penniless. I beg to move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £905,800, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The hon. Gentleman raised this question last year, and I then told him that I would look into it. I will now state what my position is with regard to the case. The principle upon which these pensions are given is that when a man dies after an accident the death must be clearly traced to the injuries which were received in the service of the country. When the hon. Gentleman raised the question last year I said I believed that the death was not owing directly to the accident. I did not know that the hon. Member intended to bring forward the case again, or I would have brought down the minutes which I made in regard to it, as well as the medical certificate. Unless the medical evidence is satisfactory, I have no more power to give a pension to the widow and orphans of this man than the hon. Gentleman has himself. The medical certificate which was placed in my hands, and which I read to the House at the time, must have satisfied everybody conclusively that the man died of typhoid fever, and not in consequence of any injuries he had received.

MR. SEXTON: What was the substance of the certificate?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: It was to the effect that the man had sustained injuries through an accident, and that he died, after having been in the hospital for some months, from typhoid fever, accelerated, probably, by the injuries he had received. But that, I maintain, is not sufficient to justify the Department in granting a pension. When the Admiralty came to deal with the matter they found that it was absolutely impossible to admit his title to a pension. I am sorry that the hon. Member should think that the widow and orphans of this man have been unjustly treated. I took the trouble to go carefully into the case last year; but I found that nothing could be done, and that it is altogether impossible to upset the Regulations of the Service. I do not think it can be said that this man was unjustly treated.

MR. SEXTON: I did not say that the man had been unjustly treated. The man is dead.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Then, his family.

MR. SEXTON: The man has gone beyond the sphere of the Admiralty Regulations. What I complain of is the treatment of the widow and children. Nothing has been said about the long-service medal, or the good-conduct medal, and I want to know whether the widow and children are entitled to receive anything in reference to those badges. If not, what is the good of granting them? It was always understood that some payment was to be attached to them. I think it would be a matter of surprise to a good many people to find that they are of no value and of no benefit at all. The noble Lord has quoted the medical certificate; but that certificate conclusively establishes a connection between the fatal result of the typhoid fever and the accident Cooper met with in 1884. It showed that the accident was of so serious a character that the man had to retire immediately afterwards, and the medical certificate proved that his constitution had become so weakened that he was unable to resist a slight attack of typhoid fever. If that is not a close connection between the accident met with by this man in the Queen's Service and the cause of death I do not know what such a connection means. The noble Lord says that he is debarred from giving a pension. But is there not such a thing as a gratuity or a compassionate allowance? The noble Lord told us last year that the technical restriction of the Regulations has sometimes been waived in order to permit of a compassionate allowance being granted. Surely this is a case of that kind, and the Admiralty might safely waive the Regulations. The noble Lord will certainly fail to persuade me that if he desired to come to the help of this widow, he has no power to do so. I am satisfied that the Department has some discretion in these cases.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have no discretion in this matter at all.

MR. SEXTON: Cannot the noble Lord or the Department give the woman a compassionate allowance?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No.

MR. SEXTON: Then what is the meaning of saying that the technical restriction of the Regulations has sometimes been waived?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The meaning of that is that sometimes a too technical interpretation has not been placed upon them.

MR. SEXTON: In this case the doctor says that the typhoid fever was fatal because of the accident and the injuries the man had received, and the noble Lord refuses to allow a pension because the death was brought about by typhoid fever. Now, the doctor established a direct relationship between the accident and the death, and I would ask the noble Lord to explain whether the Department is absolutely debarred, in a case of this kind, from giving a compassionate allowance? Is it not possible to recognize the extreme hardship of this case by waiving a direct interpretation of the Regulations?

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff): I should have thought that this was essentially a case which came under the designation of a compassionate allowance. It is not at all an uncommon case that when the cause of an accident may have been somewhat remote the death of a public servant has happened in consequence. Although I am quite aware that, according to the Rules of the Service, no pension could be granted, I certainly think that this is a case for a compassionate allowance.

SIR JOHN PULESTON (Devonport): I happen to know of a recent case in which the noble Lord the First Lord and his Colleagues at the Admiralty were governed by an appeal made to them under somewhat similar circumstances, and even a case touching closer to the Rules than one which has been represented by the hon. Member. It was the case of a man who met with an accident, and actually died from the effects of that accident while still in the Service. It so happened that he did not go into the hospital, and he failed to get a certificate from the naval surgeon. Nevertheless, the Regulations were so strict that he was prevented from getting what he otherwise would have been entitled to. Three different appeals were made to the noble Lord and his Colleagues; but they were without effect. I am bound to make this statement in justice to the noble Lord, because I believe that representations were made by him and the Admiralty to the Treasury. I certainly deprecate as strongly as I can the serious delay of the Treasury in answering these applications.

MR. SEXTON: In the case mentioned by the hon. Member, what was it that was asked for? Was it a pension?

SIR JOHN PULESTON: No; it was a gratuity, because a pension was debarred under the Rules of the Service.

MR. SEXTON: Was it stated whether the noble Lord had power to grant a compassionate allowance?

SIR JOHN PULESTON: It was stated that he had not.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM (Bristol, E.): It strikes me that the whole of the Navy Regulations in regard to the non-effective Service require overhauling. At the same time, I am prepared to say that the non-effective allowances have now reached such a point that no private business in the country could stand anything like the calls which are made upon it. I believe that the country very much knows that fact.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is not speaking to the specific point now before the Committee. An Amendment has been moved to disallow part of the Vote on behalf of a particular widow and her children.

MR. HANDEL COSSHAM: I thought the Amendment related to the reduction of the Vote by £1,000 on general considerations.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): May I point out to the Committee that if it is the desire of the Government to promote recruiting in the branch of the Service to which this unfortunate man belonged they should pay attention to this crying shame—namely, the inhuman treatment these poor fellows get, and the state of absolute pennilessness in which their families are left if they meet with an accident. If you want to get soldiers and sailors you have to recruit them from the ranks of the people; and if cases like this are allowed to be made public here and there throughout the length and breadth of the land, do you seriously think you will promote the efficiency of the Service? Will it get you volunteers? You know perfectly well that it will not. This is a case which a responsible Ministry ought to have treated as a case of humanity. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members opposite may laugh. It is very easy to laugh; but I maintain that this is a case of humanity, and it is a case which ought to be borne in mind if you really desire to promote the efficiency of the Service. This man died practically from injuries which he had sustained in the service of the country. As a medical man, I know that there are always two causes. There is the predisposing cause, and the determining cause; and I hope that hon. Members opposite will take notice of that fact, if they did not know it before. In this case the predisposing cause was the injury the man received, and the determining cause was the fever. The doctor who gave the medical certificate very properly set up both on the face of his certificate. My hon. Friend brought the question before the House last year. The noble Lord relies simply upon his memory; but he cannot dispute any of the facts that were stated last year. If the noble Lord has really at heart the interest of his Department, he will no longer gloss over this case, but will pay to it the attention which it demands. It is a case which every kind-hearted and sympathetic man will be of opinion deserves greater attention than it receives.

Major BANES (West Ham, S.): I do not think that this is a case in which we ought to allow personal feeling and compassion to predominate; and I am satisfied that hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House would be the first to impugn the motives of the Government if they were to do so. I myself brought to the notice of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty a case quite as hard as that which the hon. Member for West Belfast has mentioned. It was the case of a gunnery instructor of the Royal Navy, who had served for many years, and had been four or five years a gunnery instructor under the Duke of Edinburgh. He was not an Irishman; but he happened to be an Englishman. He came up to London on the day of the Jubilee. He was kicked in the chest by one of the cavalry horses, and was killed on the spot. He left a wife and family of young children. I applied to the noble Lord the First Lord for a compassionate allowance. The noble Lord took the case into consideration; but he found that, under the Rules of the Service, he could not grant a gratuity, and the result was that the widow and children had to suffer. So it has been in many other similar cases. I quite agree that these cases are very hard; but I do not see how the Admiralty can go beyond the Rules which have been laid down in such cases.

Mr. GILLIAT (Clapham): The Committee will, perhaps, recollect that I called the attention of the Government to the case of a man named Grover, who had rendered very valuable services, but was invalided, and subsequently died. In that case the noble Lord held that it was impossible to grant a gratuity without contravening the Rules of the Service. In all these cases the First Lord of the Admiralty has to be guided by the Regulations which have been laid down; and I think it would be unwise for the Admiralty to allow feelings of compassion to prevail in cases of this kind.

Mr. SEXTON: I do not think the hon. Gentleman the Member for Clapham (Mr. Gilliat) need be alarmed at the compassionate feelings that are entertained by the noble Lord. For my own part, I cannot believe that the Rules of the Admiralty are so strict as hon. Members seem to suppose, because I find that altogether £25,000 have been granted for compassionate allowances. In this particular case, I think it is a question not entirely of compassion, but of expediency; and I would ask the noble Lord whether he is willing to consider between now and the Report of Supply whether the Board of Admiralty have any discretion, and whether they will consent to grant a compassionate allowance? I am perfectly satisfied that, if the present policy is to be continued, the recruiting service in Ireland will be altogether banned.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I am quite ready to look once more into the question, but I must tell the hon. Member that last year the matter was very fully considered, and I doubt very much whether it will be possible to make any grant.

Mr. SEXTON: I only ask for a compassionate allowance.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON: I am afraid that the Treasury will adhere to the Regulations, but between now and to-morrow I will look into the case and see if anything can be done in regard to it.

Mr. SEXTON: Under these circumstances, I will not take up the time of the Committee by dividing; I will wait until I see what the result is.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. HANDEL COSSHAM: I presume I shall be now in Order in calling attention to the non-effective charges, which amount to about one-sixth of this Vote. I do not think that any private business or trade could stand a charge of this kind, and I hope that something will be done to reduce the amount. I see that, out of a Vote of £2,000,000, nearly £600,000 are paid in the shape of pensions, and I am sorry to say that this is a growing charge. I do not propose to divide the Committee upon the subject, but I have simply felt it my duty to call attention to it.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(7.) £328,800, Civil Pensions and Allowances.

(8.) £165,100, Extra Estimate for Services not Naval.—Freight, &c. on account of the Army Department.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): May I remind the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty that he kindly promised to give some information in regard to this item?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): It is a matter which is now under consideration with the object of dividing the cost of transport between the Navy and the Army. This is a case in which part of the service is performed for the Army and part for the Navy.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I am afraid that the charge upon the Navy is by far the largest portion. We certainly did not get much information as to the way in which the charge is distributed.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am sorry to say that the services performed for the Army are not down in the Vote in detail.

CAPTAIN COLOMB: Surely the Admiralty would be able to say, for instance, what the cost of the transport to Hong Kong is.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: We have a certain number of transports of our own, and therefore it is difficult to say what the actual cost is.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): May I ask whether the proportion put down for the conveyance of troops from Egypt is supposed to pay half the expenses in connection with that transport, or whether there will be an excess? I see that the sum put down this year is £30,000, whereas last year it was £15,000. Certainly the charge which appears in this Vote is very large. Did the £15,000 expended last year pay all the expenses in Egypt, or is there any excess?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The sum of £15,000 is put down for this item this year as bearing the same proportion to the amount of troops as the sum of £30,000 last year bore to the amount of troops in Egypt at the time.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: Has the reduction of the force added to the expense of the transports?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: We have estimated that £15,000 will be a fair charge, having regard to the cost of £30,000 incurred in the previous year.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: There ought to be a distinct line drawn between the charges for the Army and those for the Navy. I am certainly of opinion that the conveyance of stores and troops might be more economically carried on if a distinction were drawn upon the charges of the two Services. As a matter of fact, the great difficulty is that one Department does sea-transport work for another without making that Department pay for it. I think that the Department which performs the work ought to make the charge against the other. In India, Departments pay for the stores they get from the Arsenals, and the result is that the stores are prevented from being wasted or made away with. In the same way the Admiralty ought to pay for all the stores provided by the War Office. I would strongly advise that that course should be pursued in future by both services.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. FORWOOD) (Lancashire, Ormskirk): I see from the Estimates that the conveyance of troop coastwise is set out separately.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR: Is it paid for by the War Office? If the War Office performs the work it should pay for it, and if the Navy does it then the Navy should pay for it.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): Am I to understand that the noble Lord contends that the whole charge for the transfer of troops is borne by the Naval Vote?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Only in our own ships.

MR. WOODALL: Then the noble Lord does not refer to hired transports?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: No.

DR. TANNER (Cork Co., Mid): These items are so dove-tailed into each other that it is impossible to discover which is the Alpha and which is the Omega. In this account we have an item for coals. I presume that the coals are furnished to Her Majesty's ships from the Government stores at Portsmouth, Devonport, or any other of the coaling stations. If that is so, it appears to me that this is an item of very great uncertainty, and it is very difficult to understand what the actual amount is that we are called upon to pay for stores. I see that we have coals supplied in various Departments. There appears to be a general split up of the Departments, in order to render the accounts as intricate as possible to any outsider, and to render it impossible to find out what is really being paid for. As a matter of fact, the vast number of accounts in which these items appear renders it bewildering for anybody who takes an interest in economical reform to make head or tail of it, owing to the way in which the same items are spread throughout different Departments. I hope that in future a different mode of keeping the accounts will be observed. Of course, such an opportunity cannot be afforded this year. In sub-head L, I see there are payments for the Indian Government in consequence of old stores being sold off. That appears to me to be a very ridiculous way in which to transact the Public Business. I think it is the duty of any Administration, whether Tory or Liberal, to take this matter in hand and endeavour to save expense to the country.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (A LORD of the ADMIRALTY) (Marylebone, E.): The item for coals on page 168 has been put there for this reason: you want to know the total expense of the transport, and therefore you must insert this item for coals.

DR. TANNER: Do you not find out what the total expense of an iron-clad is in the same way?

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: No, that is not altogether the same thing. We want to know what each individual effort costs us, so that we may compare the cost of our own troopships with that of hired transports. We have, therefore, put down the actual sum spent for coals during the service. We have also put down the cost for coals for the hired transports which were hired from the Mercantile Marine. By that means we are able to find out exactly what the transport of troops to different parts of the world costs.

DR. TANNER: It is always a pleasure to hear the noble and gallant Lord make an explanation, and I cannot forget the fact that he is an Irishman. We feel very proud of him, and we listen attentively to any explanation which comes from him, because we know that the noble and gallant Lord always means what he says. He has always preserved a high character for absolute consistency. I point out this to the noble and gallant Lord, because if you want to know how much goes to these vessels, you will have a system of check. You have the same system on board your iron-clads which burn coal, and I point out that there would be more economy and greater efficiency if there was more consolidation, and if the various items which come into the same papers were massed together, it would be greatly for the public benefit and also for the convenience of unfortunate amateurs who have to find their way through the columns of the Blue Books presented to the House.

Vote *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.

(9.) £258,100, War Office.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): Mr. Courtney, I have asked leave to interpose this Vote, No. 16, as the first, in order that I may fulfil the promise which I have made to the House that I would take this opportunity of explaining what are our intentions with regard to the change in the organization of the War Office, in consequence of the inquiries which have been recently made. I do not think that it is necessary for me to dwell at any length upon the necessity for reform. In spite of many misrepresentations and many statements which cannot really be supported, nevertheless it must be admitted that the result of recent investigation proves the necessity of a large measure of reform. The material we have before us in this matter consists, first of all, of the Report of the Royal Commission on Warlike Stores, presided over by Sir James Fiztjames Stephen. That Commission was specially constituted for the purpose of inquiring into certain charges of corruption brought against certain officials of the Ordnance Department, and I am happy to say it resulted in showing that, as regards the officials of that Department, there remains no ground for raising a shadow of suspicion against them. Then comes the Committee presided over by Lord Morley, which was specially charged with examining into the organization and administration of the manufacturing departments and was specially constituted for that purpose. It included, as the Committee will recollect, several members possessed of a very intimate knowledge of the mode of conducting large business establishments; and they have presented a most valuable Report, in which they suggest that the main object to be attained in the reform of the present system is first of all the promotion of more intimate union between the various competing departments, greater permanence in the appointments of the heads of the factories, the introduction of a larger civilian element, and the separation of inspection from manufacture. It will be seen, when I come to explain our proposals, that we attach great weight to these recommendations. Next, there is the evidence taken by the Committee of the House of Commons upon the Army and Navy Estimates. This mainly deals with the financial position of the manufacturing and other departments of the Army; but the Committee, feeling that the extremely technical character of the questions to be investigated necessitated the employment of professional assistance, accordingly obtained the power of having an independent examination of the accounts of the Department. I hope that valuable suggestions may result from this step, and the alterations we propose in the administration of the Department will enable full advantage to be taken of the suggestions made. And, lastly, there is the inquiry now going on into the clerical establishments of the War Office by Sir Matthew Ridley's Commission. Their Report is expected very shortly, and will be before us when we work out the details of our proposed changes. Having thus explained the material before us, I come back to the recommendations that have been made. Now, the Committee presided over by Lord Morley felt itself precluded by the terms of its instructions from going into any question outside the Ordnance Department. Anyone, however, who has looked carefully into the matter knows that it is impossible to consider the position of that Department by itself, and it becomes necessary to take into review to some extent all the Departments at present under the Surveyor General of Ordnance. And here I venture to ask for special indulgence in having to grapple, after a very short experience, with schemes of re-organization of the gravest character, which naturally provoke great difference of opinion. But the House will, I am sure, learn with satisfaction that the principles of our new scheme have been accepted not only by the Heads of the Civil Department at the War Office, but also by my military advisers, who are unanimous in desiring to see them carried out. The scheme, therefore, comes before the House with a great weight of authority. The Departments now placed under the Surveyor General of the Ordnance labour at present under grave disadvantages. The holder of the Office changes with every Ministry, while almost all his principal assistants are subject to the five years rule and vacate their appointments at the end of that period. And while he himself is charged by the Royal Warrant with absolute financial responsibility for all these Departments, he has no permanent financial adviser with whose assistance he could alone exercise adequate supervision. In addition to this the changes which have taken place in recent years in armaments and fortifications have been so great that at the present moment I may fairly say that the work has altogether outgrown the system established a few years ago. We are not satisfied with this state of things. We wish for a reconstruction of this Department, and I desire to point out shortly the principles on which we think the reconstruction of the Department may fairly be attempted. First, we propose to hand over to the Military Departments, subject to the control of the Commander-in-Chief, the administration of all the executive duties of the Army at headquarters. We hope to fix upon each military head of a Department full responsibility for that branch of the Service which he controls. Secondly, we desire to separate altogether inspection of manufactured articles from the actual manufacture. And, thirdly, we desire to extend the control of the Financial Department to all the branches of the War Office. The effect of this, of course, will be to take away all the present duties of the Surveyor General of the Ordnance, and accordingly it is our intention to propose that his Office should be abolished as soon as these arrangements can take effect; and, in saying that, I hope I may be allowed in passing to express for myself the great regret with which I shall lose the invaluable assistance which I have always received from my hon. Friend the present holder of that Office (Mr. H. S. Northcote). He has rendered great service at all times, but he has in particular given close attention to the details of the proposals which I propose to make, and he has in the most loyal manner placed himself entirely at the disposal of the Government. But the position of the Surveyor General of Ordnance appears to us to be at present a false one, whether the Office is held by a military man or by a civilian, and tends to distribute a responsibility which it is one of the objects of our scheme to particularize. The effect of our proposals will be best understood by a short reference to all the Departments which are affected. The Director of Artillery and Stores has at present, subject to the Surveyor General of Ordnance, complete responsibility for supplying all stores, accoutrements, and munitions of war both to the Army and to the Navy, for their inspection and custody at home and abroad, and he is also charged with the control of all the manufacturing departments. This bare statement of his duties proves what is also abundantly clear from all the evidence recently taken on the subject—that the work for which he is at present responsible, and which has grown enormously in recent years, is absolutely beyond the power of any one man, however able and industrious, to cope with. The Office of Director of Artillery is, moreover, under the present system, frequently divorced from the observation of my military advisers, and it might actually happen that even large changes might take place in the armaments of the country almost without their knowledge. We are not satisfied with this state of things, and accordingly we are prepared to sub-divide the duties of this Office, which we think can best be done by placing upon professional men the responsibility for ordering and passing into the Service all weapons and munitions of war, and by separating this duty altogether from that of manufacture. The control of the Manufacturing Departments will therefore be taken away from the Director of Artillery and will be placed under a single responsible head. This is a plan which has long been suggested, and it has now been very strongly recommended as likely to tend to the efficient, harmonious, and economical administration of these Departments. We believe that it will tend to promote all these objects. Every day that I look into the matter I am more satisfied that economies can be gained by bringing together the Departments under the control of one head, and not only that, but we are also alive to the advantage of making a single individual responsible to the House of Commons and the country for the management of all the Manufacturing Departments. We intend that these Manufacturing Departments shall be conducted so far as possible on strictly commercial principles, supplying the demands of the Army and Navy of India and the Colonies according to a programme to be settled at the beginning of each year; and I may note that this change will also take away altogether that temptation which has always existed to propose an undue extension of operations on the part of the Manufacturing Department. We are not, however, able to accept the recommendation of the Committee presided over by Lord Morley, that there should be a military head of this Department associated with a civil engineer of eminence. We think that that plan would be costly, and not only so, but that it would tend to the division of responsibility, and accordingly, following the view of the dissentient Members of the Committee, we propose that the Department shall be placed under a single head. Nor are we prepared to say that we agree altogether with the recommendation of the Committee that the Heads of Departments shall be civilians. There would no doubt be a very great advantage in the introduction of a larger civilian element; but as at present advised, I am of opinion that we should get the best man we can for this post, whether he be a military man or not. The Director of Artillery will himself be transferred to the military side, and accordingly he will be placed under the control of the Commander-in-Chief. He will retain all the duties connected with the approval of desings, and he will hold and be responsible for the inspection of all armaments and munitions of war, and in the case of those required for naval purposes he will be assisted by a representative of the Admiralty. It will be seen that if by these improvements we can accomplish this object all the warlike stores and munitions of war, after they have passed from the manufacturing establishment, will be independently inspected before they are passed into either Service. By these means we shall accomplish I hope another object in view, which has been much pressed upon me. At present, in many cases, manufacturers complain of the system of inspection to which their productions are subjected by a Department which is itself producing articles in competition with them. They ask that, so far as possible, the inspection shall be independent, and I hope that that very legitimate demand will be satisfied by the changes we are making. The Director of Artillery will, also in addition to inspection, retain the control of all warlike stores and munitions of war; but it is intended, so far at any rate as this country is concerned, to separate the stores for the Army and the Navy, the Admiralty paying the Army for the service rendered as storeholders. The details of the general changes with regard to stores are not yet decided upon; but I may say that it is our intention, as far as possible, to make every military Head of Departments responsible for the stores of the particular Department over which he has control. We hope, also, in connection with this, to be able to accomplish another reform which has been very much talked about. For the future the whole charge of the Navy armaments will be borne by the Naval Estimates; and, on the other hand, the whole charge for the transport of troops by the Navy will in future be borne by the Army Estimates. In this way the Estimates of each Department will show the true cost of the respective Services which has not been, and cannot be, possible under the existing system. The details of this arrangement, as I am sure the Committee will understand, are somewhat complicated, and not having yet been finally settled, are still under consideration. And now, Sir, I come to another Department, that of the Director of Supplies and Transport.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): Is he to be responsible for inspection?

MR. E. STANHOPE: The Director of Artillery is to be responsible for the insepction of manufactured articles; but I think it would be better to be allowed to complete my statement before replying to questions. I need not trouble the Committee by going into the history of our Supply Department; it is, I think, sufficient to say that the purely civilian control in this Department has been in recent years in a gradual process of modification. The establishment of the Control Department in 1868, which included some military officers in its upper grades, failed to receive the confidence and support of the Army, and in 1876 it was abolished. Since that time the civilian Heads of this Department have been gradually displaced by military men, and even the civilians who remain have been given military status in the shape of honorary rank. At the present time, out of a total establishment of 321 officers and warrant officers in this Department, only 95 are civilians, and even these will very likely be largely reduced within the next few years. The time has therefore come when it is possible to transfer the charge of this very important Service altogether into military hands; and this is, in fact, the course recommended by a strong Committee which sat to consider this subject in a former year. At one time there existed a state of constant friction between the Army and the Civil Department of Supply which was attached to it. The officer of the Commissariat not being a soldier, and not being altogether in the confidence of the General Officer commanding, was frequently not consulted, and the result was sometimes a breakdown of the Commissariat such as has been spoken of in recent times. Now, the whole of the Supply and Transport Services will be placed under the Quartermaster General, who will in time of peace be able to train an efficient staff of officers thoroughly able to exercise these important functions in time of war. The office of Director of Supplies and Transport will be abolished, and the whole of the financial duties of seeing that the necessary funds are provided, advantageously administered, and properly accounted for, will be transferred to the Financial Department of the War Office; and here, Sir, I should like to say that this change is not proposed because of any complaint of the manner in which the duties of the office are at present discharged by the Director of Supplies and Transport — it is proposed in consequence of a very strong recommendation of the Committee, which, I think, is generally endorsed by officers of the Army. I can only express my opinion which I believe will be supported by my Predecessor in Office as to the admirable way in which these duties have been discharged in recent years by Sir Arthur Haliburton, the Director of Supplies and Transport. The only remaining office under the Surveyor General which need be specially mentioned is that of the Inspector General of Fortifications. This officer is technically responsible to the Surveyor General of the Ordnance in financial matters, but there is at present no adequate permanent financial control, and, accordingly, on the principle we have laid down, the Inspector General of Fortifications will be transferred to the military side under the control of the Commander-in-Chief, while the whole control of the financial arrangements of the Department will be placed under the Financial Department of the War Office. I am afraid that I have very imperfectly explained to the Committee the nature of the changes proposed, and I should be glad to be allowed to make a short recapitulation. On the military side of the War Office there will be—first, the Adjutant General, the Deputy of the Commander-in-Chief, who will be responsible for the discipline and efficiency of the Army; and he will control all the Departments of the National Forces, including the Pay Department, which will be transferred to him and the Intelligence Department. The Quartermaster General will be charged with the whole of the supply and transport duties of the Army, and he will control and issue those stores which are necessary and peculiar to the Department over which he reigns. The functions of the Director of Artillery and of the Inspector General of Fortifications I think I have adequately described, except that the latter will also have control over the engineering and submarine mining stores peculiar to the Department. The Military Secretary will, as at present, control the promotions and appointments in the Army. These five grades will constitute the military side of the War Office, and will be made in every possible way responsible for the efficiency of the Departments under their control. The general effect of this plan will be that the primary responsibility will be placed on the heads of the Army for the whole of the land defences of the country. On the civil side of the War Office, the Financial Secretary and his principal financial assistant will have financial charge of all the Departments of the War Office, and they will also have the examination and audit of the accounts. They will have greater responsibility and greater powers, but I hope that by stopping lower down some of the details which now overweight them, they will have more time to give to larger questions of expenditure. Then there is the Director of Contracts, whose functions will be practically unchanged, except that we hope in this Department to make as much more open as we can the tenders for the Army. Then there are the Manufacturing Departments, which will be under a single head; and, lastly, the Clothing Department. The work of the latter Department is of a somewhat special character, and although there can be no doubt that in order to make our scheme complete we ought to make some change in the Clothing Department; yet as I am desirous not to overweight our proposals, I incline to the opinion that this Department should, at any rate, for the present, be left as it is. And, lastly, Sir, in order to secure joint action, and also to ensure adequate discussion of all important subjects, we propose that all the heads of the Civil and Military Departments should occasionally meet as a Council. The Secretary of State will preside, and I need scarcely say that it is not intended by the proposed establishment of a Council in any way to diminish the undivided responsibility which he has at present for all the Departments under him. I am sure that the Committee will understand that there are a great many details connected with this scheme which are not yet settled, and I hope that I may ask the Committee not to press for a further statement of them on this occasion. But the scheme which I have endeavoured to explain involves no increase of expenditure whatever; on the contrary we believe that when it is effectually carried out it will effect a reduction of charge for Establishments, and I am sure it will enable a tighter hold to be kept on the military expenditure of the country, while it places, as I believe it will, the whole administration of the War Office upon an intelligible and efficient basis. I have now to thank the Committee for allowing me to make this statement, and will conclude by expressing a hope that it will not be thought necessary to discuss at any length the Vote for the War Office, with regard to the Civil Department of which, as I have said, we are expecting shortly the Report of the Committee. There will, no doubt, be very important suggestions in the Report, and we shall have an opportunity, between this and next Session, of considering how far the recommendations of the Committee can be carried out.

Colonel DUNCAN (Finsbury, Holborn): I am sure the Committee has listened with pleasure to the exceedingly clear statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, who, I trust, will not on this occasion be subjected to too severe a questioning as to details. But there are one or two questions which as a member of Lord Morley's Committee, I must press upon his notice. It appears that the right hon. Gentleman does not approve the recommendation of that Committee that a military man should be at the head of the Manufacturing Departments.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Perhaps the hon. and gallant Gentleman will allow me to say that it was suggested that there should be two heads of the Department—a military man and a civilian.

Colonel DUNCAN: Exactly. It stands now that a civilian is to be at the head of the Manufacturing Department.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir; I did not say that. I objected to the double control, and said that in this case, as in every Department, I should endeavour to get the best man I possibly could, whether military or civil.

Colonel DUNCAN: I am glad to hear that my view of the right hon. Gentleman's meaning was not correct. But with regard to the head of the Department, I invite the right hon. Gentlemen to inform me whether he thinks it would be possible for a man who did not live on the spot to give the necessary close attention to the work of the Department. I would also urge upon the right hon. Gentleman very strongly that in making his arrangement he should bear in mind that soldiers are continually undergoing instruction, and that it would, in my opinion, be far better to select a military man who could deal with difficult questions when they arise, even although a scientific man might have somewhat more technical knowledge. I think it would also be well to increase the number of military men in the War Office Department, by which means you would get a class of men well acquainted with the requirements of the Service, and at less cost. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will be able to afford us some information on these points before the Vote is taken.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): I cannot allow the great changes of a revolutionary nature which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War proposes to make in the administration of the War Office, to pass without urging upon the Committee their grave nature. Among the various changes in the Army system during the last 33 years, those now proposed are far greater in extent and nature. I would remind the Committee that up to and during part of the Crimean War the Army system of the country was carried on in five or six separate and independent Offices. The Militia of the Kingdom was under the direct control of Parliament. The Commissariat in its finance and executive duties was under the direct control of the Treasury. The *personnel* of the Artillery and Engineers was commanded by the Master General of the Ordnance; whilst the Master General, with the Ordnance Board, controlled and directed the stores of the Army and Navy, the buildings and fortifications of the country. The Infantry and Cavalry of the Army were, in respect to their discipline and duties, under the Commander-in-Chief;

and their finance efficiently and economically carried on by the Secretary at War; and, finally, in time of need, the Secretary of State for the Colonies performed the duties of Secretary of State for War. The Crimean War led to the appointment of a Secretary of State for War separate from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to whom the Commissariat, the finance, and *personnel* were transferred by the Treasury. The Secretary at War, with the Cavalry and Infantry, fell under the Secretary of State, as well as the Artillery and Engineers. At a later date, Lord Panmure broke up the Board of Ordnance, carrying on the detail duties in the War Office under his own immediate control; at a still later date the control of Parliament over Militia was transferred to the War Secretary. The great object of these changes was, to concentrate under the Secretary of State the whole military system of the country, with the complete and sole responsibility for the efficient and economical administration of the details of the Service; whereas the proposed organization virtually provides for the individual management of Departments, and for responsibility being fixed on separate heads. After an experience of 13 years from the Crimean War, Sir John Pakington, in 1868, found the duties and responsibilities over the entire Military Service so onerous, that on the advice of Sir Bartle Frere, Sir Henry Storks, and myself, he decided on forming an internal control over the separate branches of the War Office, so as to aid him in his supreme control. To this end Sir Henry Storks was appointed Chief Controller, and I was his Assistant. This division lasted with good financial effect until Mr. Cardwell decided, under an Act of Parliament, to divide the duties under three responsible Heads—Commander-in-Chief, Surveyor General of the Ordnance, and Financial Secretary — and this formation is the one which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State proposes to re-organize, and to still further individualize the duties and responsibilities of the War Office. With the experience we have now had of War Office administration, it cannot but be regretted that the economical and efficient administration by the Board of Ordnance and Secretary for War had not been maintained. No doubt, many difficulties, large expenditure, and inefficient management would have been avoided if the Secretary of State for War had assumed the general control of Departments, instead of taking the duties in detail under his sole and personal care. At all events, as far as I can judge, from merely listening to the speech explaining the details, the Secretary of State for War will now perform the duties of general control instead of personal management of details. It appears to me that the transfer of the duties connected with the armaments and warlike stores to the Adjutant General of the Army is not one worthy of being commended. The armaments as well as the equipments of the Army have always, in this country as well as in India, been subject to the general control of the Commander-in-Chief and of General Officers in command, the Ordnance Department and the Artillery Officers being mainly responsible for the fixed armaments mounted and the reserves in charge of the Ordnance Department, as also the warlike stores not required to be in immediate use. The present arrangement for the Adjutant General to have these armaments and stores under his control, is open to the grave objection of adding to his already sufficient duties. It is true that a Director of Artillery is also transferred to the Adjutant General, but in subordination to him, becoming thereby a purely executive officer. The marked and novel feature of the scheme is, in the transfer of the Commissariat Department to the Quartermaster General, on whom will rest the sole responsibility of the Commissariat in all the many duties connected with the transport and provisions of the Army. In addition to these, the Intelligence Department, hitherto under the Quartermaster General, and apparently properly so, is handed over to the Adjutant General. There is also added the Pay Department to that officer's duties. It may be, therefore, truly said that the two highest officers of the military portion of the Army must have had insufficient military duties to perform, or else that the large addition of the new duties now imposed upon them cannot possibly be well performed. This, however, we may assume—that the many complaints which we have hitherto had against the defects in the stores and armaments of the nation, and in regard to the shortcomings of Supply and Transport, will either be silenced by much larger expenditure than has hitherto been incurred, or else that the cries about defects will not be heard against the powerful heads of the military side of the War Office. I do not wish to urge more objections against the proposed scheme, because I admit that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State was under the necessity, from the loud cries which we have heard against the efficiency and financial management of the War Office, to re-organize the whole system. I may, however, be excused for saying that if I live long enough I do not expect to see the advantageous results which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State anticipates. I approve of the Financial Secretary including the Accountant General's Department exercising complete and efficient control over all monies of every kind entrusted by Parliament to the Secretary of State. Indeed, I am at a loss to understand how this control has not been exercised. It formed a prominent feature in the control arrangements made by Sir John Pakington; whereas, under Mr. Cardwell's scheme, this important principle of financial control must have been given up. The change in the Manufacturing Departments I have long advocated. These departments will be found exceedingly useful to the Army and Navy in manufacturing stores, and in keeping in check the prices charged by contractors. The finance of these Departments should be entirely distinct from the War Office Estimates, and made solely dependent for funds on the great branches of the Service, such as the Navy, Army, India, Colonies, and other Departments. The orders for manufacture given in time before the beginning of each year should be accompanied with an undertaking to pay by instalments the cost of the work as carried on. I, however, doubt the policy of placing all these Manufacturing Departments under the immediate management of one head. I do not believe it possible to find any one individual with the qualifications necessary for the direction of all manufactures so varied in quality, kind, and nature. All that I would wish done is the appointment of a Head with the powers of general supervision of financial control, but with fit Heads for each Department, qualified for the executive duties in detail. Of this I am confident—that the Government will never secure the services of Heads for these Departments on such economical salaries as at present. I am well pleased to hear that the Director of Contracts will carry on his duties as hitherto; but I am altogether at a loss as to how his relations to the various Departments which require his aid will be maintained as hitherto, seeing that they are in a great degree not under the immediate control of the Secretary of State. The financial control of the War Office is still retained by the Secretary of State; but, seeing that the Departments over whom that control will be exercised are separate from his immediate supervision, I am very confident that the new system will not work harmoniously, and certainly far from economically. One great and important improvement consists in the entire separation of the Naval stores from those of the Army. Whilst in the War Office I urged this separation, and for the 15 years I have been in Parliament, year by year I have advised the separation, and that the charges for the naval stores should be estimated for in the Navy Estimates. The cost of sea transport for Army men and stores, instead of being paid for out of Naval Estimates, in future will be borne—as I understand from the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord George Hamilton)—on the Army Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State mentions, in addition, that the cost to the Army of storekeeping for the Navy will be repaid by the Admiralty. I earnestly hope that the Navy will be allowed to provide for their own storekeeping; they have far better means than the Army. Their warrant officers and petty officers are peculiarly well trained for the charge of stores; the knowledge which can thereby be acquired by officers of the Navy and of the Marines will be singularly valuable in a professional point of view. I wish I could close my remarks by saying that the new system of organizing will be more efficient or economical than the present one; but time alone can prove whether my fears are well founded.

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): I rise to express my satisfaction at the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for

War. We have for a long time suffered from failures due to divided responsibility, and we have never been in a position to bring home to any individual the blame for what has occurred; in the future, however, owing to the changes which the right hon. Gentleman has to-night laid before us we shall be enabled to trace the defects which may exist to those who are responsible for them. With reference to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that the Adjutant General will be Head under the Commander-in-Chief, I consider the arrangement might be carried a little further, so that the officer of the Adjutant General's Department may practically be the Head of all the staff in the various districts throughout the country. I think it is right, generally speaking, that the Commander-in-Chief, assisted by his Military Secretary, should have the making of all appointments and promotions; but when I see an hon. and gallant Officer like the Member for Birkenhead (Sir Edward Hamley) left out in the cold for a number of years, I cannot but think that there is something wrong in the system, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will be able to give his attention to the matter. No doubt, confidential reports of officers are sent to the Military Secretary, who lays them before the Commander-in-Chief; but the Adjutant General is responsible for the discipline of the Army, and I certainly do not see the necessity for keeping a Military Secretary of the high position we have now attached to the Commander-in-Chief, while the Adjutant General, who knows all about the discipline of the regiments, can bring specially to the notice of His Royal Highness the case of any officer considered to be inefficient. As the matter stands now, you have a double report sent in; and although it is a matter of detail, I think the practice is objectionable. There is no doubt that it will be a matter of much trouble to make these proposed Departments work satisfactorily; but if the plan of the right hon. Gentleman is carried out, and if close attention is given to the subject, I am of opinion the Army will be much better looked after in the future than it has been in the past. There has been no failure of the Commissariat in India, whereas in England it has failed on many occasions. The position of general officers at present does not admit of their becoming practised in matters of economy; they have, in fact, nothing to do with it, whereas, I think it admits of no question that in the same way as the Commander-in-Chief looks after the Army, the general officer in a similar way should look after his district and be responsible for everything that occurs in it. Of course, there might be some failures at first, for even Secretaries of State are not expected to succeed in their work the moment they are appointed to Office; and so it will be with some general officers. But by all means let them have an opportunity to try and get their hands in, so that when you send them on field service they may be efficient in all particulars, and be able to keep that grasp on every branch of the Service which, in a general officer, is so essential, but for which an officer now has to wait until he goes on active service to commence.

Mr. WOODALL (Hanley): I think that no one can have listened to the address in which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) has expounded his scheme without being impressed with the plainness of his statement; at the same time, most of us must feel that the question is so wide in its bearings and so necessarily intricate, that it is impossible at once to recognize the effect of some of the changes suggested. I cannot but regret that we have not been aided on this occasion by the excellent new method of supplying a printed Memorandum before being called on to discuss these proposals. But the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War has, at any rate, had the advantage of a multitude of counsellors. He has been aided, as he has told us, by a number of Committees of Inquiry, and perhaps he has felt what has been felt by most of us, that there was some inconvenience in the several bodies entrusted with these inquiries overlapping each other in respect of their investigations. In regard to Lord Morley's Committee, on which I had the honour and advantage of serving with my hon. and gallant Friend opposite, we were entrusted, as the right hon. Gentleman has stated, with inquiries sufficiently wide and important in themselves, but which did not, as we interpreted them, extend to the general administration of the Ordnance Department itself. As I had some responsibility in connection with the right hon.

Gentleman the then Secretary of State for War in appointing that Committee, it may not be uninteresting to say that the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Campbell Bannerman) thought that our best way of dealing with the question would have been to address ourselves, in the first instance, to an investigation of the Manufacturing Department, and then have a reconstituted Committee in order to address itself to the larger question of how far the Ordnance Department was satisfactory for supplying the ordinary wants of the Army. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) will not have forgotten the agitation in the country 12 months ago, and the circumstances which rendered it imperative that there should be an inquiry into the very grave charges that were made not only with regard to the efficiency, but the integrity of those who were actually employed in the Department. We cannot allow this opportunity to pass without joining in the general congratulations that the charges have been so completely disproved. Let it be remembered how loudly, how confidently, these public servants were charged with corruption, corrupt favouritism, conspiracy, and incompetence—the Ordnance Department was said to be "a seething mass of corruption." These were the reasons which, in the minds of some, alone could explain how it was that guns of Colonel Hope and others had not been adopted into the Service; these reasons alone could justify the fact that certain Gentlemen were not placed on a specially constituted Committee to inquire into certain allegations; and it will be remembered that not only the public mind was possessed of these notions, but that they received the endorsement of *The Times* newspaper and several responsible Members of this House. But here we have found that a Royal Commission, after what has been admitted to be one of the most searching and thorough investigations by which these charges could be examined, has declared that they have no foundation; and Mr. Justice Stephen sums up by saying that—

> "The result of our whole inquiry into the charges of corruption brought before us is that we think they have utterly failed, and there was no evidence brought before us to justify even the suspicion that there has been any corruption at all among the superior officers of the Ordnance Department."

We cannot allow this occasion to pass without calling attention to the fact that this was the view strongly expressed by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury and those who had had experience of the War Department; but it is only fair to say that after dismissing the question of the integrity of the officers of the Department, the Royal Commission held that there was evidence of a considerable amount of inefficiency. I have followed as closely as I can the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) with regard to the changes which he proposes to make, and I observe that he does not refer to the particular reflections made by the Royal Commission upon the Office which he holds with so much advantage to the State, and with so much ability, especially bearing in mind that the Secretary of State for War is therein said to be charged with duties which it is morally and physically impossible that any one man can discharge in a satisfactory manner. The Report of the Commission says—

> "No one can possess the strength or knowledge which would be indispensable for the purpose; but even if such a physical and intellectual prodigy were found he would have to do his duty under disadvantages which would reduce him practically to impotency."

Now, the important question which I think underlies the whole of this inquiry is as to the particular relationship which exists between the Parliamentary and the technical and professional sides of the War Department, and I think that the Royal Commission, with all respect, does not seem to have completely realized that matter. Here and there are, for instance, statements which are obviously inaccurate—the statement for instance that there is no continuity in the administration of the Department, and no security that particular principles of manufacture will be adhered to or that particular systems for making guns and rifles will be developed; that each Secretary of State takes his own view, and each is advised by persons with whom he happens to work. I hope I shall convey a strong contradiction of that statement when I say that whatever may have been the faults of the Department, there has been a steady continuity of policy under the guidance of able professional men who, happily, have not been affected by changes of Government. I desire to make one reference at this particular point to my right hon. Friend (Mr. Childers) who, at one time, filled with so much distinction the position of Secretary of State for War, who is associated in the Report with a responsibility not only administrative but technical with regard to the inquiry into the proposed new rifle. There is the statement, for instance, that the inquiry as to the new rifle was embarrassed somewhat by the exclusion from it of the consideration of the breach, and that that was done, to the regret of the Committee, by the action of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Edinburgh (Mr. Childers). The words are—

> "They learnt that the decision to retain this action was made by Mr. Childers personally. They remonstrated with him upon the matter; he, however, refused to alter his decision, and retained the rifle that they were constructing."

It is very extraordinary that such a statement as that should be made. I know it was made before; it was made and contradicted in this House, and it is contradicted in the evidence submitted to the Commission. The Director of Artillery, for instance, gives evidence in precise and definite terms that the decision was arrived at by His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, by and with the consent of his military advisers. I mention that only as going to show that the Secretary of State for War has been all along served by perfectly competent advisers, and that his decisions have been usually made in complete harmony with those by whom the military chiefs are guided. With regard to the position of the Surveyor General of Ordnance, we may all at any rate agree that it has been an anomalous Office, and that it has been considerably prejudiced by a rather extravagant and absurd title. It has also been exposed to the very great inconvenience of being the only important Office of State of which there was no permanent equivalent. The Surveyor General has been responsible for the Department to the House of Commons as its Parliamentary exponent, but I should suppose that for every other similar post in the State there has always been some head who is the permanent executive, and therefore a very important guide and aid to the Department. And I observe that although considerable reflections have been made upon the folly of entrusting such important duties to civilians who have no military or professional training, it does not appear that there has been much greater satisfaction given when the Office has been discharged by very distinguished military men—such as Sir Henry Storks and Sir John Adye. We have listened tonight to a most important and, as I think my hon. Friend near me correctly describes it, revolutionary proposal, and I trust that the hopes of the right hon. Gentleman in making these changes will be fully realized. My first feeling is one of very great relief that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War has not adopted the recommendations of Mr. Justice Stephen in the main to reconstruct the Ordnance Department under a Master of Ordnance, who should be a Member either of this House or of the other House, who should be an important political figure, but independent of Ministerial changes and Party vicissitudes. No one can look at the manner in which that recommendation is stated in the Report without feeling that the recommendation carries with it its own contradiction. The Commission has, indeed, frankly stated that it might easily happen, or it might generally happen, that if the Master of the Ordnance held Office for seven years he would take an important part in the Government of the country after the retirement of the political Party by whom he was appointed. That is sufficient, I think, to show how utterly impracticable is this suggestion. But there is a suggestion in the Report of the Royal Commission which I think I find embodied in the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, and that is the constitution of a Council to the Master General of Ordnance. Now, the general motive of the Royal Commission, and especially in regard to this suggestion, is one which I am perfectly certain has seriously occupied the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. The Royal Commission desired to find some sufficiently authoritative body or office which would be independent of the necessity of adapting itself to the politics of the hour, and which would put on authoritative record the necessities, the requirements, and deficiencies of the Service. I observe the right hon. Gentleman stated with great force and authority that in any proposals which he submitted to the House there is not the slightest intention of weakening the full responsibility of the Secretary of State to Parliament; but I gather that in the various heads of the different Departments he thinks he will have a council which will be able to advise him with judgment and with authority upon all the matters which come within the responsible administration of the War Department. I want to press him for an answer upon the point, if he does not think it inexpedient to give one, as to how far he accepts the evidence of a desire on the part of the Royal Commission that there should be some authoritative body whose reports should be published, and which should, to a certain extent, be independent of the Secretary of State, or of the Government of the day, with regard to the responsibility and accuracy of the statements they might make. I know that strong evidence was given in favour of this by Lord Wolesley. Now, Sir, we come to that portion of the inquiry which was entrusted to Lord Morley. I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman speak of the value of the inquiry which was conducted by the Committee which had the good fortune to be presided over by Lord Morley. I do not think any reasonable complaint can be made that the right hon. Gentleman has not adopted in its entirety the Report of Lord Morley's Committee; because, although that Committee did address itself to the task entrusted to it with a very single-minded desire to arrive at a proper conclusion, and was in fact substantially in accord upon all the main points, the Committee felt quite conscious that there were many points on which there was still room for considerable difference of opinion. We did feel, and I am glad to see that feeling recognized by the right hon. Gentleman, that with regard to the Factories there was a great want of continuity and harmoniousness of management. It was obvious to us that the general control of all these immense establishments by the Director of Artillery was impossible. General Alderson—than whom the State could hardly have a more efficient servant—himself admitted that the many claims upon his time rendered it impossible for him to give that direct and continual control which was certainly required. For that reason we have recommended that the five great manufactories should be, as far as practicable, treated as different branches of one arsenal, and that, with that view, there should be placed over these establishments one General Superintendent, who we recommended should be called the Superintendent of the Ordnance Factories. I find that the right hon. Gentleman does not quite go with the Committee in the recommendation that the Superintendent of the Ordnance Factories should be aided by a Chief Mechanical Engineer, and I am frank enough to say that was a recommendation arrived at after much deliberation, some difficulty, and even some hesitation; and no one will find fault with the right hon. Gentleman if he thinks he can find one man sufficiently capable to take up the whole of the duties. At any rate, such a plan as that suggested would secure that which is felt to be greatly needed—namely, unity of administration. The right hon. Gentleman did not say where the responsibility of design was to rest.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I said that the approval of the design would rest with the Director of Artillery.

MR. WOODALL: I gather that while you relieve the Director of Artillery of all responsibility for manufacture, upon him would devolve the responsibility of design.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I used the words "approval of design."

MR. WOODALL: He is not to be called upon to design, but will be the judge of the merits of designs, whether the designs are made in Government factories or by independent contractors. Well, the conspicuous and all important change which is involved in the new scheme is the transfer on a very large scale to the military side of the War Department. That transfer will probably involve some diminution of friction, but no one can express an opinion upon it until we see the actual details of the proposal itself. It is very satisfactory to learn that the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman have been approved by his advisers on the civilian as well as on the military side. I have spoken so far merely with reference to the Manufacturing Departments, and I gather that the Chief Superintendent of the Ordnance Factories will have control of all the manufacturing factories, the powder and small arms factories. Then comes the disappearance of another very important Department, and that is the Department of Supply and Transport. The right hon. Gentleman justly paid a sort of parting tribute to the very able man who has been entrusted with that Department. Sir Arthur Haliburton is not only a man of the greatest ability and courtesy, but he may challenge the severest criticism of his administration of the Supply and Transport Department under the trying circumstances of the recent wars, and be able to come out of the ordeal with flying colours. The Department was admirably managed during the Egyptian Campaign. I believe it was established as true that of the supplies sent to Egypt during the several campaigns, less than 5 per cent were unaccounted for, and that the actual losses from any preventible cause fell something below 1½ per cent. I speak in the presence of hon. Members who have personal knowledge of the facts. Although supplies were transported from the base to the front, sometimes as often as 40 times by road, boat, train, and camels' backs, the result comes out that Lord Wolseley testifies that there never was an Army in the field more efficiently served. It is only just to say so much for a very able and devoted public servant, especially after what has been commonly supposed to have been the disclosures of the Committee which sat upstairs in connection with supplies. Then the Department of the Inspector General of Fortifications goes over to the military side, and with it, I suppose, everything in the nature of provisions for buildings, roads, and all other matters which have hitherto been discharged by that Department. I do not quite understand what will happen to the Clothing Factory and to the Department of the Director of Contracts. I know the right hon. Gentleman mentioned them, and I understood him to say that they were to remain as at present. [Mr. E. Stanhope: They will be placed under the Financial Secretary.] Then practically we shall come to the disappearance as a military administrative figure of the Surveyor General of Ordnance, and such of his duties as are now transferred to the military side will devolve upon the Financial Secretary to the War Office. That is the conclusion which was anticipated, and which, in effect, would have been recommended by my right hon. Friend the late Secretary of State, and one which I hope will be found to work on the whole very satisfactorily. It will obviously increase very considerably the importance of the Department of the Financial Secretary to the War Office. But I believe it is allowed that that Office has not hitherto been overworked, and I have no doubt at all that provision will be made by some means to increase the dignity as well as the importance of the Office. On the whole, I think that we may take it that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State has addressed himself, as we know he would, to this important task with great earnestness, and a desire to arrive at a thorough and efficient reform. Let us hope that the reform will be lasting, that it will command the co-operation of all persons concerned, and that it will realize the expectations the right hon. Gentleman has formed with regard to it. At the same time, it is perfectly impossible to speak with confidence with respect to it, and I suppose it will be necessary for him to come to Parliament for legislative sanction. The condition of things established in 1870 was brought about under the authority of an Act of Parliament. One of the points I should like to put to the right hon. Gentleman is how far the change contemplated will necessitate the repeal or the amendment of that Act? I am sure we have all listened with the greatest pleasure and attention to the right hon. Gentleman, and I congratulate him upon the general tenour of his scheme.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I think I may fairly follow the hon. Gentleman, and I thank him very much for the tone of the speech he has delivered. Although, of course, the hon. Gentleman reserves his judgment upon some of the suggestions I have made, I am bound to say that, on the whole, he is favourably disposed to my proposals. I should like to say, in the first place, that so far as I know no legislation will be necessary. The legislation under which the Surveyor General of Ordnance was appointed gave power to the Secretary of State to appoint the Surveyor General or not, and enabled him to lay down by Royal Warrant the duties of the Surveyor General. With regard to the transfer of the Supply and Transport Department from the civil to the military side, about which the hon. Gentleman spoke, I should like to say that it is a change strongly recommended by a powerful Committee, which examined carefully into the matter, and that it is also recommended by Sir Arthur Haliburton himself. I think that at once commends the change to the House. The hon. Gentleman also asks me with regard to the Council which it is proposed to set up. I am afraid that the Council I proposed is not the sort of Council which he sketched out, and which was recommended by the Royal Commission. I have no intention of proposing any such Council; I do not believe that it would be possible for the administration of the War Office to be carried on in this House if there were a Council empowered to make its Reports public independent of the Secretary of State. It is difficult in these days to carry on the administration of the War Office; but I think that to have the Head of the Ordnance Department independent, or to have a Council to Report to Parliament independently, would make the task of the Secretary of State almost impossible. The hon. Gentleman seems to be labouring under a misapprehension in respect to another point. He seems to think that it is intended that the responsibility of the Secretary of State should be diminished, and the responsibility of the Commander-in-Chief increased. Now, the effect of the proposal is this. At the present time responsibility in regard to warlike stores is practically divided between the Director of Artillery and the Surveyor General of Ordnance. The effect of my proposal will be that the whole responsibility for the warlike stores of the Army will be placed upon the Director of Artillery, who will be subject to exactly the same control, as at present, of the Secretary of State, and subject in addition to the financial control of the Financial Secretary, so that the guarantees the House will have in regard to the administration of this important Department will be more ample than they have been up to the present time. The Commander-in-Chief will be the head of the military side, but the control of the Secretary of State will be as absolute as it is at the present moment. With regard to the control as to warlike armaments, it is obvious it all depends upon finance. These things cannot be ordered unless money is provided for them, and, that being so, there is the double control of the Secretary of State, because he controls the Commander-in-Chief on the one hand and the Financial Secretary on the other. Now, my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Holborn Division of Finsbury (Colonel Duncan) spoke of the desirability of the Establishments at Walham and Enfield being under the control of the Head of the Manufacturing Department. They will be under such control, and no inconvenience will be found to arise therefrom. Then my hon. and gallant Friend also asked me with regard to the introduction of a larger military element into the clerical establishment of the War Office. That is a question which has often been raised in this House, and which has been raised upstairs in Committee. I should be very glad to see a larger military element at the War Office if it could be introduced; but I am not able to make any proposal to the House on the subject now, because I am waiting the Report of the Royal Commission presided over by Sir Matthew White Ridley, and which is examining into the Civil Departments of the War Office. I must see exactly what the Commission proposes before I can make any suggestion. I think I have now referred to all the points which have been raised in the course of the discussion.

COLONEL DUNCAN: Will the right hon. Gentleman say who will be the Head of the Inspecting Department?

MR. E. STANHOPE: He will be the Director of Artillery. He will be responsible for the inspection of all articles which come to the Army, whether manufactured by Government or by private contract.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I think the Committee is indebted to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) for the very clear statement he has made. I think that so far as principle is concerned the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman are necessary. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman at what date is it proposed that the change should commence; and I should also like to ask him whether the question of the five years' appointments has been considered, because there is a great deal to be said on both sides of the question? There is no doubt about it that in any Civil Department, in any great private manufacturing business, or in any establishment requiring knowledge and supervision, it would be regarded as madness to change heads of Departments absolutely every five years. Another matter I should like information upon is the separation of the naval and military charges. I think the Committee will have heard with the greatest possible satisfaction that all charges on the Army Votes under this system will be really for Army purposes, and that all charges on the Navy Votes for Naval purposes. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War stated, for example, that the transport services for the Army will be transferred to the Army Vote. I should like to know whether the net cost or the detailed charges will be transferred? With regard to military clerks I will not say a word except to say that I agree with my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for the Holborn Division of Finsbury (Colonel Duncan), and that there should be a greater infusion of military officers of experience into the War Office. There is one more point I wish to refer to, but it is one on which I I cannot expect the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State to give me an answer now. I must, however, take the opportunity of bringing it under his notice for fear that it might escape his attention. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of Colonial support. Now, let me point out that since all the various re-organizations have taken place in the War Office, a new state of things has arisen very much out of our sight, and that is the growth of the Colonial Military and Naval Forces. Of course, these forces must be supplied with stores. Now, because the War Office was in no way in touch under former systems with the military element of our Colonies, it so happens that some of our Colonies have adopted armaments of a pattern which we are not prepared to supply. The War Office may not know it, but demands will come home on the outbreak of war, and we shall not be able to meet them, unless we are in some way in touch at the War Office with the Colonial Military Authorities. I beg that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will make inquiry of those who held Office, or will have the Correspondence of 1878 examined with regard to the supply of stores for armaments in the Colonies. I think he will find that when the Colonies thought and expected that they would have to defend themselves, there came tumbling in from all parts of the Empire demands for all sorts of stores, which we were not in a position to supply. I therefore hope that, as the War Office is being re-organized upon principles which I believe will endure, this matter will receive the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. I am sure, knowing the interest the right hon. Gentleman takes in the Colonies, it is only necessary to bring this matter to his attention to secure its being considered and dealt with by him.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: I am much obliged to the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Captain Colomb) for his kindly reference to myself. Of course, the last point raised is one which I cannot be expected to reply to at once. He asks, first of all, as to the date when these changes will come into operation. I do not want to pin myself to any one date, but I want to bring them into operation as best I can; of course, they cannot all be brought into actual effect until the 1st of April next. So far as I can, I wish to bring them into operation at the earliest possible moment. Then he asks with regard to the five years appointments. I recognize the value of what he has said upon this point. It is not our intention to limit the appointments to the Headships of the Manufacturing Departments to five years. I think we should be able to keep a good man when we have got him. Then, with regard to the actual charge of transports thrown on the Army Estimates, I should prefer to postpone my answer to that question until a subsequent date.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): The main feature of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War is the very large transfer of War Office control to the Commander-in-Chief. Notwithstanding the theory that the Secretary for War represents the popular element in this country, I have very great doubt as to whether, so long as the Commander-in-Chief is a great Officer of State, and in direct relation to the Crown, the control over such a great Office by the War Office will be, and can be, so complete as it is sometimes asserted to be. That is the only doubt I feel I ought to express with regard to the statement which has just been made.

Vote *agreed to.*

(10.) £76,000, Yeomanry Cavalry.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I should like, for one moment only, as an old Cavalry soldier, to say a word about this Vote. No one doubts that we want an irregular body of Cavalry to support our regular body of Cavalry—that we want a good and efficient body of irregular Cavalry; but that is what I would suggest we have not got. The Government are asking for £76,000 for Yeomanry, and for that sum we support 10,000 men—that is to say, give them three dismounted drill and eight days mounted drill in the course of the year. I submit that it is utterly impossible to imagine that we can get a good and efficient body of irregular Cavalry with the amount of drill and with this amount of money spent upon it. Of course, there are regiments of Yeomanry which are more or less efficient, but they have a great deal more money spent upon them than the Government are asking for now. For my own part, I should like to see the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War either reduce the Yeomanry to a quarter of its present strength and ask for the same Vote, or else see the Vote now asked for quadrupled in amount, keeping the Yeomanry at its present strength. In either case we should get an amount of drill such as would make the men thoroughly efficient; or, at any rate, more efficient than they are at the present time.

Vote *agreed to.*

(11.) £655,000, Volunteer Corps.

(12.) £448,000, Army Reserve Force.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I should like to ask the Representatives of the War Department on the Treasury Bench a question with regard to this Vote. I should like to know what becomes of the Army Reserve man when he has put in his 12 years' service. We will suppose that the men are of the average age of 18 when they join, and that they stay in the Army six years—they may only spend three, but it is open to them to spend another three or six—say they spend six years in the ranks, and at the age of 24 go into the Reserve, receiving a certain amount of pay, I think it is 6*d.* a-day. When the man arrives at the age of 30—that is to say, after six years in the Reserve, I should like to know what becomes of him. I should like to know what the Government have to say about it, because I have a good idea on the subject myself. My idea is that you turn him away altogether, and that appears to me to be a very bad thing for the country. All the training that you have given to him is useless. I think he might with considerable advantage go on even to the age of 40, if you keep him in a sort of garrison reserve. I certainly do not see why men in the Reserve should be put out of it at the end of six years' service. Probably the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary (Mr. Brodrick), who has been more in attendance on the Army and Navy Estimates, than perhaps any other Menber, and who appears to have taken a deep interest in all these matters, will be able to give me some answer to my question. The matter is one of great interest to myself, because there are many of these Reserve men up and down my own constituency.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kircaldy, &c.): I do not object to having a Reserve Force, on the contrary, I should like to see it retained, and I should like to see the number larger than it is at present; but I am of opinion, that if we are to extend the Reserve Force, the present description of Reserves which we possess are not of the right kind. I cannot help thinking that the efficiency of the Army has been too much sacrificed in favour of the half-and-half system we have adopted. We have a sort of Regular Reserve under which system men are liable to be called out for foreign service, and we know that, situated as this country is, it very often happens that we are under the necessity of sending men on foreign service. Well, Sir, the country has been able to absorb a certain number of men who are ready at the call of the country when they are wanted, but my own belief is—and it is not altogether my own belief alone, because I am fortified in my opinion by that of Friends of much greater experience than myself—that if you extend this system at all, and the Reserve becomes too large, the country will not be able to absorb them without great difficulty—you will not find a sufficient number of employers of labour who are willing to take the men—and the result will be to cause great discontent amongst the men. The country can absorb a number of men in this way no doubt, but if you go beyond a certain point, I do not think the country will be able to do so. I think you have already got to the number the country is capable of absorbing under present conditions. I think that you ought not only to have as large a Reserve as you have, but one ten times as large. I am strongly of opinion that we should divide the Army into two parts, and that we should have one Army for service abroad, and one for Home defence, like the Militia, which I should like to see ten times as great as it is now. This it appears to me can only be managed by a material alteration of the conditions under which the Reserves are formed. I think you should allow men to enlist in the Army, merely to qualify them for military service without being liable to go on foreign service or to India. You could, by a system of that kind, make your citizens capable of defending their country in the Reserve in connection with the Militia. In this way you would have a great defensive force, which I am sure, under present modern conditions, would render our position much more secure than it is. This is a country of great wealth, and it behoves us to make a great effort for its defence, but it will never be secure until it has such a system of defence as I propose. I think we can only secure the end which I hold to be so desirable by passing your men more quickly through the Army than you do now. You ought rather to do that than send all your soldiers to India making your Army professional soldiers. This view that I am expressing is one that I have long held. It is a view which has been growing, and which Secretaries of State have been inclined to. I think the noble Marquess the Member for Rossendale (the Marquess of Hartington) when Secretary of State for War, inclined to it, for he made an experiment in the matter. He tried it in the Guards, and I must say that I should not have thought that the best experiment would be in that quarter. However, the experiment was made, and it proved successful. I should like to know if the experiment has been extended, and whether the Government do not think that it should be largely tried in other directions. Do they not think it would be advisable to extend the Reserve very considerably? Should we not have a Reserve which is not liable to foreign service, but which would only be liable to be called out when the country is in grave danger? You ought to be able to keep your Reserve up to a certain number by putting the men discharged from the Army in connection with the Militia, and giving them a retaining fee. I would ask whether the Government have under consideration the extension of the three years' service system or a shorter service system, and whether we may not hope in that way to have a greater Reserve than we have at present.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Surrey, Guildford): I cannot follow the hon. Member into his observations on the short-service system; but the question as to what becomes of the Reserve men when they are discharged is one which has occupied the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. After the expiration of 12 years, Reserve men can retire into civil life if they desire to do so; but if they so wish, they can be retained in the Reserve for four years longer.

Colonel NOLAN: Are they retained?

Mr. BRODRICK: Mostly they are; but the difficulty which has arisen is in making sure that they can obtain employment. An earnest attempt has been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State to get all classes of employment for them in the Government service. The condition of the Reserve is most satisfactory. It is found that very few cases of fraudulent enlistment take place, and I think hon. Members may rest assured that the present system is working satisfactorily.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): The objections raised by my hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) against the Army Reserve of 52,000 men are worthy of consideration, because the abolition of this force would result in important changes if his views were adopted; because this change could not be carried out without the country being provided with another force to serve as a Reserve for the Army. This probably would end in a large increase to the numbers of the standing Army, or else a kind of conscription would follow, so as to provide this country with the extensive Reserves which the Continental Armies have. At all events, considerable expenditure would be incurred in providing additional recruits for the Army. In fact, Mr. Cardwell, who largely extended the system of Army Reserve, did so in imitation of the Continent; he fully expected that the passing of men through the Army and entering them in the Reserve would have produced a much stronger force than has yet been provided. My own leaning is to a different mode of providing Reserves for the country. I am of opinion that the Militia, as re-constituted in 1756, would have formed the nucleus for a much more extensive and less expensive force than we at present obtain by means of the Militia and Army Reserve, as these forces are now formed. As I see the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary paying attention to my remarks, I suggest to him to read up the papers which have been written about supplying the country with Reserve Forces. I refer to the speech of that able man, Mr. Windham, on the training of men for the defence of the country. This practically provided for military training being given throughout the country to the young men willing to receive it. I believe that military instructors might be told off for each county to train the young men, who might be paid provided they attended a sufficient number of drills to ensure some degree of military fitness. Then there are most excellent papers in *Cobbett's Register*, written by that remarkable man between 1809 and 1813. Indeed, so good are these suggestions, that if the several papers, referring to the Army with reference to recruits, were reprinted so as to omit the parts which give a clue to the authorship the suggestions would be received as suitable to the present day. One part I would mention was a weekly payment, small in amount, to be paid to the parents of men who join the Army. I cannot but think that it would be well for the Government to resort to this means for securing services of men. In Ireland it could not fail to have a most beneficial and useful effect. With regard to the Vote, may I ask the Financial Secretary to sub-divide the charge of £440,500 under the different heads now lumped together. I have several times been put to great inconvenience by not having the amount of the several items.

COLONEL NOLAN: This is a very important question, and I am much obliged to the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary for the observations he has made. In the few words he has spoken he has given us a great deal of information. I did not, myself, know of this four years' extension of service; but I certainly think the Reserve men, after the expiration of their period of service, ought to be kept longer if they desired it—in my opinion, they ought to be kept in the Reserve up to the age of 40; at any rate, in the Artillery and Cavalry, as it takes a much longer period to qualify a man in these branches than in any other. If they could not be conveniently utilized in any other way, the large additional strength you would gain by adopting this system would enable you to have a greater force on garrison duty, provided, of course, that the men agreed to it. In the case of strong, healthy men, there is no reason why they should not be kept on such duty up to the age of 50. I am rather surprised at what has fallen from the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), because he is a person who always looks upon matters from a common-sense point of view—and, of course, we all know that upon Indian matters he is almost the first authority in the House. When he said that this country could not absorb more than the present Reserve, I could not help thinking of the two greatest military countries of Europe—namely, France and Germany—I could not help thinking that these countries manage to absorb 2,500,000 men.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: My point was that the country could not absorb them whilst they are liable to be called out for foreign service.

COLONEL NOLAN: I am rather of opinion that, in this country, the Reserve men have been called out unnecessarily. There have been instances in history where men have been called up unnecessarily from time to time until they have become dissatisfied, and when cities have been really in danger, and a call has been made upon them, they have refused to obey it. I think the Reserves ought never to be called out unless the country is really in imminent danger; and I also think that where you have a good soldier you should never force him into early retirement. Let it be a free service; but, of course, in the case of all soldiers I would not keep them for a long period in the Reserve, unless they were good shots, and, whilst in the case of the Infantry I would not keep them unless they were good walkers, in the case of the Cavalry I would not keep them unless they were good riders. I would not be, however, very strict with regard to character, and I would not reject a man on that score, unless, of course, he happened to be an unusually bad man. By accepting men in the way I propose you would have a good and effective Army ready to serve you abroad and at home, and at the same time you would have a good and effective Army at home. Of course, you would never be able to compete with Continental Armies, because the conditions are not the same. At any rate, what I suggest appears to me to be a solution of the present difficulty, and I think everything has been pointing to this solution lately.

Vote *agreed to.*

(13.) £542,700, Commissariat, Transport, and Ordnance Store Establishments.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL (Kirkcaldy, &c.): I have given Notice of my intention to move the reduction of this Vote and one or two other Votes; but I may at once say that I am not going to raise the questions mooted, as they have already been dealt with by the Committee. I am going to restrict myself to a hard matter of account, except with regard to one subject dealt with in a Paper delivered this morning, which raises another reason why we should remove our Army from Egypt, and save the money that it costs. On this occasion I will go into this matter of account. I think it will be admitted that in regard to our Army in Egypt there has been a great saving, therefore we may expect that Her Majesty's Government will agree to another reduction. The reduction of expenditure, so far as I can make out, is a reduction which is not to the relief of the British taxpayer, but to the benefit of the bondholder. The Egyptian Government was bound to pay £4 per head per month, that makes £48 per annum for each English soldier. That bargain was quoted by the Auditor General in his last Report, and as it is known to the Committee I need not waste time by quoting it. There was superadded to that bargain an understanding that, in no event, should the expense exceed £200,000. I find that the present Army Estimates, the amount to be received for the Army in Egypt, is £185,000, and £15,000 in the Navy. I do not go back on the original bargain, provided that bargain, such as it was, is kept. It is not kept if this £200,000 is not paid, and if the bondholders have their way it will never be paid. I want to know if the Government are to get the contribution from Egypt that stands on the Estimate, or if they are going to allow the Egyptian bondholders to get out of it as they have before? It is a question whether the British taxpayer should——

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. E. Stanhope) Linconshire, Horncastle): I think the hon. Member is probably under a misapprehension. The real fact is that the expenditure in the Estimates is the excess expended over the amount which these troops would cost in the ordinary way in Europe. It is true we put in the Estimates the amount we expected to pay; but if the troops do not cost us that full amount, the hon. Member cannot expect that the Egyptian Government should pay us a bigger sum.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: I agree that if under your bargain of £48 per head the charge comes under £200,000, then the sum should be reduced; but we have some 4,500 troops in Egypt—and we have had during part of the year a great deal more—if the right hon. Gentleman will reckon that amount, he will find that at £48 a-head it comes to more than £200,000. The bondholders in Egypt, and those who represent the Government of Egypt, have made a great outcry on various pretexts and have managed to cut off the payment of the full amount. I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) is not present, because——

The CHAIRMAN: I feel a delicacy in interfering with the argument of the hon. Gentleman, but the £185,000 in respect of the Army in Egypt is an Appropriation in Aid, which comes on under Vote 1. I do not see how the hon. Member is entitled to raise the question of the reduction of the Appropriation in Aid under this Vote.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: My impression was that I could move the reduction of this Vote.

THE CHAIRMAN: On what ground?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: On the ground that the money is not received in Appropriation—that the Appropriation is not received in Vote 1. If, Sir, you rule me out of Order, I must proceed upon another ground. I would move to reduce this amount on account of the relations between our Army and Egypt, as shown in the Papers published this morning. I refer to the attack made upon an English officer and the military execution that followed.

THE CHAIRMAN: Can the question be raised on this Vote?

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL: I would venture to submit, Sir, that if the Army were removed from Egypt, as I would have it removed, this money would be saved.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I would appeal the hon. Gentleman not to discuss the matter to which he refers in detail.

Vote *agreed to.*

(14.) £830,000, Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies.

(15.) £2,943,500, Supply, Manufacture, and Repair of Warlike Stores.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff): I listened with great attention to the statement of the hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, and I was satisfied with it. I also could not take exception—although I feel very strongly on the point—to his proposal to keep open the question whether the managers at the head of the Manufacturing Departments of the Army should be military men or civilians. I noticed that as soon as he had completed his speech an hon. and gallant Gentleman below the Gangway on his own side of the House (Colonel Duncan) put in an appeal on behalf of the appointment of military officers at the head of the Manufacturing Departments. Now, I really trust the right hon. Gentleman will not yield too readily to that proposal. The reason assigned for it by the hon. and gallant Gentleman was one of a very familiar kind, but singularly weak in my opinion. He states that there are many non-commissioned officers and other military men of an inferior position employed in the Royal Arsenal and other manufacturing establishments, and forsooth, it would interfere with their comfort and satisfaction to have a civilian placed over them! Now, Sir, notwithstanding the authority of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I must say that the reason he has given for his proposal is most unsatisfactory. The idea of placing at the head of the Establishment, which the right hon. Gentleman opposite very properly promised us should be conducted on commercial principles, a military officer, whose training is certainly not of a technical character, and for no better reason than that the Department gives employment to some soldiers, I think would be reducing the reform of a great Department to the lowest possible point. One of the great grievances and one of the great grounds of dissatisfaction on the part of the Army, for very many years past, has been the absorption of mechanical duties and mechanical control by military officers. Now I can quite understand the desire, and quite sympathize with the desire, on the part of naval and military men as far as possible to employ military and naval men; but when a great scheme has been proposed for the reform of a great Department, and one branch of it, which is to separate the Manufacturing Departments from purely military control, and to establish these Departments upon a commercial and manufacturing basis, surely it is to threaten the breakdown of the whole reform to insist upon placing at the head military managers. I thought the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War on that question very satisfactory, because what he said was that he would not pledge himself or the Government to the appointment of either military officers or civilians as Heads of these Departments, but that they would appoint the best men whether military or civilian. I do not think it would be fair to ask more than that; but I would express a hope that in deciding such appointments the right. hon. Gentleman will bear in mind that outside the Military Services, there is a great distrust of manufacturing departments managed by military officers, and there is a general feeling that such departments ought to be governed and controlled by men who understand manufacturing, and have been trained to it—by men who have given their lives to such duties.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): It was my intention to have spoken very fully on this Vote, but this is now unnecessary because of the announcement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War of his intention to separate the stores, hitherto kept under the War Office, for Navy, as well as for Army, and to arrange for the Navy paying to the Army the cost of the services rendered, as well as for the Army paying the Navy for the transport of troops, hitherto borne by the Navy Estimates. There is one change which I would urge in regard to the intention of the War Office to continue to be storeholders for the Navy. I earnestly advise that the Navy should be allowed to be their own holders of stores. In the naval officers, especially Warrant officers and petty officers and seamen, the Navy has a *personnel* admirably adapted for the charge of stores—with daily training in the custody and care of stores — and, therefore, for the charge of the magazines, armaments, and stores they would have duties to perform which they are hourly in the habit of exercising. I speak from experience when I say that I wish the Army had classes of men as efficient and as well qualified for the charge of stores as are the seamen, marines, and officers of the Navy. In addition thereto the Admiralty possesses a Marine Artillery, as fine a force as England has.

Vote *agreed to.*

(16.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £862,300, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for superintending Establishment of, and Expenditure for, Engineering Works, Buildings, and Repairs, at Home and Abroad, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888."

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE (Bradford, Central): Mr. Courtney, this Vote contains two items, one of £1,500 for the commencement of a new factory for the manufacturing of Brennan torpedoes, and the other of £4,500 for the installation of those torpedoes; and it is stated in a footnote that the latter sum is merely of a provisional character, and that no determination has yet been arrived at as to the number to be installed. Then, Vote 15 contains the further sum of £16,000, part of the enormous sum of £110,000 which it has been agreed to give to the inventor of the torpedo. It is quite clear that this means the commencement of what will probably be a very large expenditure on this new weapon of defence; and therefore I feel it my duty to raise a protest against it, and to urge the Government not to proceed further without more inquiry into the matter. I can assure the Committee I should have been very glad to have postponed this discussion until next Session; but in the meantime all these works will be commenced, and next year I should be told that the House had already agreed to the matter and I was too late.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. E. Stanhope) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): It has already.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: The Committee will recollect that the subject of this torpedo was somewhat sprung upon the House in a Supplementary Vote early in the Session, when we were asked to Vote £30,000 out of the £110,000 to the inventor. I think that at that time no single Member of the House, with the exception perhaps of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth (Sir William Crossman), knew anything about the matter. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, very few Members had heard anything about the matter. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth, who is a man of great scientific attainments, certainly knew something about it, and he raised his voice againt it. When I heard the details it seemed to me that the proposal was novel, and of such doubtful expediency, that I suggested a Committee should be appointed, not to consider so much the details of the particular invention, but to inquire into the expediency of entering upon such a policy as that of purchasing the secrets of inventions of this kind. The Government, however, refused, and the money was voted. In consequence, I presume, of the part I had taken in this matter, I received many communications on the subject of this torpedo from naval officers and others, and I was induced to make further inquiries. The result of my inquiries is to raise in my mind the gravest doubts as to the value of the weapon for defensive purposes, or as to the secrecy of the invention, for which we have agreed to give this enormous sum. I can undertake to say that the opinion of nearly all competent naval officers on the subject is that the weapon is of little or no value for defensive purposes, and they have all expressed the most unbounded astonishment that the Government should have given this large sum to the inventor, which is quite unprecedented. Beyond this, there appeared in *Engineering* a short time ago a series of articles purporting to give a full description and drawing of the torpedo. I have ascertained that the writer is a gentleman of great practical knowledge of torpedoes and of high character. That gentleman's statement is that, so far from the torpedo being any secret, all its main features were the subject of a patent which was taken out by its inventor in the name of another person five or six years ago, and his contention is that any practical engineer taking this patent and applying to it the knowledge and experience derived from the Whitehead torpedo, which is now no longer a secret, would have no difficulty whatever in constructing, if not exactly a Brennan torpedo, at least one capable of performing everything claimed for the weapon. Before going further, I will shortly describe the Brennan torpedo. It is a very ingenious device. The torpedo communicates with a fixed engine on shore by two wires. These wires unwind from rollers in the interior of the torpedo, which are connected with the two propellers; the pulling in from shore of these wires gives motion to the rollers and sets the screws in motion, and thus the harder the wires are pulled the faster the torpedo goes ahead to sea. The direction is given by pulling at one or other of the wires. All this is minutely described in the patent which I have in my hand, in which I am informed that any competent engineer can construct it. The only possible secret is in the method employed in keeping the torpedo at a uniform depth below the water, but that has been achieved in the Whitehead torpedo and others of the same class by a hydrostatic valve acting upon rudders, and it is probable that the Brennan has some analogous arrangement. In order to steer the Brennan it is necessary that its course should be clearly seen from the shore, and that is effected by a staff showing a flag above water. This, however, constitutes its main defect, for the flag can be equally seen by a ship against which it is directed, and which can then easily avoid it. The torpedo also clearly requires a fixed engine ashore, which requires the protection of a battery, and its whereabouts will always be known. There are also defects in its range, and in the fact that it cannot be brought back when discharged. As I have said, naval officers who are competent to form an opinion, are almost unanimously of opinion that it is of little value as a means of defence, on the ground that it can be so easily avoided. One naval officer of great repute has told me that if any officer under him were to lose a vessel through such a torpedo he would have him tried by court martial, and shot for negligence. I can quote any number of opinions on the subject, but I will content myself with one, that of Admiral Sir Cooper Key, who is a very high authority on such matters, and who states that in his opinion, and in that of all naval officers who have seen the weapon, it is of little value as a defence against ships, on the ground that it can be so easily avoided; that it can only be of use in very narrow channels, and that there fixed and sunk torpedoes will be far more efficacious. This I believe to be the opinion of nearly all naval officers; and I challenge the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) to say whether this is not his opinion and that of his naval colleagues. On the point of the secrecy of the invention the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) and the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) made a very great point of this when recommending the Vote at the beginning of the Session. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury said that the Government considered it to be so important to keep the secret from the knowledge of other Powers that, if this could be done for five years only, it would be worth the money it was proposed to give for the invention. I cannot think the right hon. Gentleman can have known when he said this that all the main features were fully described in a patent which is open to any foreign Goverment. I feel certain that the House would not have voted the money if it had known that the main features were the subject of a patent. For my own part, I thoroughly disbelieve in the possibility of keeping anything of this kind secret. There is an immense amount of engineering talent devoted to the subject of torpedoes, and there are already in the field at least six other torpedoes of the same class communicating with the shore by wires, and differing only in the method. Some of them are directed by electricity, some have their engines in their interior, two at least of them which are American inventions appear to have at least equal speed, and to have superior qualities to the Brennan. I should like to know whether any investigations were made as to these rival weapons before giving £110,000 for the Brennan? I allude to this for the purpose of showing that, although these particular torpedoes may not be identical with the Brennan, yet there are evidences that the engineering mind is especially directed in the direction of torpedoes, and that if others have not arrived exactly at the same solution of the thing they are very much on the same path. In the opinion of many competent men, and of Foreign Governments, many of these torpedoes are as valuable, if not more valuable than the Brennan. I have consulted on this point a member of one of the most eminent engineering firms in the country, and he said that, in the first place, it is impossible to keep a thing of this kind secret. There are so many minds directed to the manufacture of torpedoes at this moment that depend upon it whatever course you may adopt other people will be close upon your heels and will arrive pretty much at the same result. My friend said to me that if, instead of giving £110,000 to the maker of this particular torpedo, the Government had offered a reward, say of £10,000 for the best controllable torpedo an efficient weapon would have been forthcoming. He had not the smallest doubt that within a few weeks a dozen valuable inventions would have been sent in all of them very closely approaching, and perhaps many of them exceeding in value, the Brennan torpedo. I think that the facts that I have brought under the notice of the Committee and of the Government at least show that there are some grounds for hesitation in this matter. I cannot help thinking that the Government have been somewhat hastily led into adopting this Brennan torpedo. My own impression is, that it would have been wise before going further in the matter to, at all events, have instituted further inquiry. I do not go further at this moment. My belief is, that it would be expedient and wise on the part of the Government to undertake an independent inquiry into this matter, putting upon the Committee of Inquiry—I do not mean a Committee of this House, but a Committee outside this House—some of the most eminent scientific and practical men, with a view of inquiring not merely into the value of the Brennan torpedo, but into the weapons of the same kind which are in the possession of other countries or which have been laid before the public by other inventors, and also with the view of inquiring into the question as to whether the invention of the Brennan torpedo is really a secret, whether the main features of the Brennan are really a secret, and of that value which they are represented to be. To my mind it seems clear that, if the facts I have stated are to be relied upon, it will be found eventually that we have spent a very large sum of money without any great result, and that it may also be found that other Powers are in possession, if not the Brennan torpedo, possibly of a torpedo of greater value. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £6,400 merely for the purpose of raising the Question.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £855,900, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

MR. E. STANHOPE: It is somewhat unusual, at any rate according to old fashion notions, to raise a discussion on precisely the same subject twice in the course of the same year. We discussed this matter very fully at a time when there was a large attendance. Many hon. Members spoke, and at that time the House, without any hesitation, arrived at the conclusion that this was a very good expenditure of public money. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) now asks, why do not the Government, instead of spending this large sum of money, offer a reward of £10,000 for the purpose of obtaining the best torpedo which anyone can produce. Well, I am bound to say that the Government with which the right hon. Gentleman was connected had ample opportunity of doing what the right hon. Gentleman speaks of, but they did not do it. What, however, they did do was to spend many thousands of pounds in encouraging Mr. Brennan to perfect his invention although they had no claim whatever to the torpedo. First of all the right hon. Gentleman raises the question of secrecy in respect to this torpedo, and he actually suggests that my right hon. Friend the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) could have known that the details of this torpedo or some of them had been published. Of course my right hon. Friend knew all about that, but I can say that, so far as I am informed, there is not a single statement which has appeared in *Engineering* from which the secret details of the torpedo could be ascertained. Nor is there the smallest suggestion at the present moment that the real secret—the secret for which we have paid this sum of money—has been in any way discovered or made known to anyone outside the people actually concerned in the manufacture. The right hon. Gentleman says we cannot keep secrets. That may be so, it may be that the secret of the invention will leak out; but I hope that before it does we shall have made a larger number of them. We have at present made 30 or 40 of these torpedos, and we shall be in a position to place them in situations where they will be of service before other nations know anything about them. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman has seen the torpedo at work, although he has described it in great detail. Those who are specially qualified to advise me at the War Office, and who have investigated this torpedo in all its bearings, are of opinion that it will be a weapon of the greatest possible value in time of war. I noticed the right hon. Gentleman studiously avoided quoting military authorities. He says that naval men whom he has consulted do not think it will be a very useful weapon. I fully admit that many naval men say that this torpedo cannot be fired from a ship; but, on the other hand, those who have a great opinion of this torpedo say it could. I will not express an opinion upon the point; but I have in my hand a written opinion of one of the most eminent naval men in this country, a gentleman whom I asked particularly to be good enough to go down and inspect this torpedo, because he had expressed an opinion in private against the advantages to be derived from it in time of war. This gallant Admiral went to see a trial of the torpedo the other day, and he has reported to me his opinion that this torpedo will be a most formidable weapon for the defence of channels through which vessels must pass within 2,000 yards of the shore. This is most powerful testimony, because it comes from a gallant Admiral who was at first prejudiced against the weapon. All I can say is that, from the best opinions we can obtain, we believe we have got a weapon of great value and importance, and one which can be applied usefully in the defence of many of our rivers, which will not require any other defence than the Brennan. The weapon is one which I believe will be of the greatest advantage in the defence of the coast of this country.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff): The speech the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War has just delivered is exactly the speech he could have delivered in respect to any other torpedo. Opinions such as he has quoted can be obtained in regard to all kinds of weapons. Now, I have not seen any of the operations connected with this torpedo; but I have conversed with a gentleman who has seen the torpedo, and who has thoroughly studied the subject, and the opinion of that gentleman—a military officer—is that he could not see how the Naval Authorities could attach any value at all to the torpedo. Now I feel very strongly on the matter on the ground that the grant now asked for is a misappropriation of public money. We are called upon year after year to vote a large sum of money for this torpedo. I hold that this is wrong in principle, because it is perfectly possible that long before we have discharged our obligations to Mr. Brennan in these annual payments another torpedo of greater value may be placed at our disposal. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. E. Stanhope) said with great emphasis —he always speaks with emphasis—that the Brennan torpedo would be valuable for an attack from shore against a ship within a range of what?—2,000 yards—a little over a mile. I confess I am at a loss to understand the national value of a system of defence which only has a range of a little over a mile. I did not catch the exact purport of the interruption of the hon. Gentleman the Civil Lord (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett); if the hon. Gentleman will make himself a little more clear I shall be grateful to him. This is an example of voting public money under conditions which are unjustifiable when judged by the standard which all gentlemen apply when voting money for matters of this kind. I remember that I once had the greatest possible difficulty in getting the Government of this country to recompense me for my own personal expenses in the production of a design of a ship which cost £106,000 less than its predecessor, and which was pronounced by Naval Authorities to be a great deal better than its predecessor, as it certainly was cheaper. Yet, because I was not a stranger or an adventurer in any sense, or a person coming from a distance, I had the greatest difficulty in being reimbursed my own outlay on that design. I have known many other cases in which men have contributed beyond all question to the advantage and the economy of the Public Service; but in those cases no Minister ever thought of coming down to the House to ask for many thousands as remuneration for the men who had so acted.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The question of remuneration of Mr. Brennan is not in this Vote. We are dealing with the cost of torpedoes.

SIR EDWARD REED: I quite understand that; and although my remarks may seem outside the Vote, they really apply to it, for the reason that we are not only to pay money under Vote 15, but we are to erect establishments under Vote 13, which is now before the Committee. Now, with regard to the unknown character of this torpedo my right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) stated very truly that matters of this kind are very rarely kept secret for any length of time at all, for whenever there is any real value in an invention other inventions of a similar kind are brought out. These things are not the product of one man's brain; the principle of the invention may be said to be "in the air," and it generally emanates from a number of quarters at once. In the case of the Whitehead torpedoes, it will be remembered how the Government put themselves in relation with Mr. Whitehead. What was the consequence? We went on building inferior Whitehead torpedoes at a high price after superior torpedoes had been produced and supplied to the whole world at a lower cost. That is a fact which is within my own knowledge. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Shaw Lefevre) has limited his Motion. Formally it takes the shape of a reduction of the Vote; but in reality it amounts to a request that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will make further inquiry into this matter. Now, I, for one, will object year after year to be told that because the Vote has been granted in the previous year we are to be debarred from resisting the Vote in the year upon us. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War has rather reflected on my right hon. Friend because he has ventured to discuss this matter twice in one year. I do not think that was a fair cause for a reflection. If the proceeding of my right hon. Friend is unusual, surely it is an unusual proceeding to give a private inventor £110,000 for his secret, and then to ask for public funds for a factory in which to carry out the invention. The whole proceeding is of an unusual character. If we do not oppose demands of this kind at a very early stage we shall lay ourselves open to reproach. Although I feel very strongly on this subject, I do not think, looking at the late period of the Session, it would be right to prolong this discussion. I can only say I entirely sympathize with the position taken up by my right hon. Friend with regard to this part of the Vote. I regard it as a wasteful expenditure of the public money; and I think it is essentially in the nature of a transaction which will not bear the scrutiny of Parliament, and for that reason it is most objectionable.

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: I do not wish to prolong the debate, but merely to say a word in reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. The right hon. Gentleman took exception to my bringing up the subject a second time this Session; but I justify my action on two grounds. In the first place, since I last brought the question forward communications have been made to me by Naval men, of whose opinions I had no knowledge before, all tending to show there was the gravest doubt on the part of the Naval Profession as to the value of this invention, and asking that strong representations should be made on the subject. I have challenged the noble and gallant Lord the Member for East Marylebone (Lord Charles Beresford) to express his opinion on the subject; but he is discreetly silent. I ask him to say whether he is or is not adverse to this invention. I am satisfied that the great majority of naval men will agree with me in the opinions I have ventured to express. The second ground on which I justify my action to-night is that a statement was made in *Engineering* to the effect that the main features of this torpedo had been the subject of a patent, and that there is no secret worth any large sum. I said I could hardly think that the right hon. Gentlemen the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) and the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) knew that fact when they advocated the giving of £110,000 for this alleged secret. The hon. Gentleman the Surveyor General of Ordnance (Mr. H. S. Northcote) has described the main features of the torpedo as those of a controllable weapon; but the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War says that there is another secret, the nature of which I understand he does not know himself. The whole thing is a matter of uncertainty. From all I have read and heard about the matter, my view is that that other secret, whatever it may be, is of a very subordinate character as compared with the main features, and not worth anything like £110,000. The future will show that I have done my duty, as a public man, in bringing the facts within my knowledge before the Government; and they must bear the responsibility of the action they have taken in the matter. I have great confidence that it will turn out I am right in this matter—that this is not a real invention, and that the torpedo is of no value.

The SURVEYOR GENERAL of ORDNANCE (Mr. H. S. Northcote) (Exeter): I should like to correct a statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Central Bradford (Mr. Shaw Lefevre). He says I described the main features of the torpedo as being those of a controllable weapon. That was not at all my statement. I said it differed from other torpedoes in being controllable; but the main feature is a secret, with which neither my right hon. Friend (Mr. E. Stanhope) nor myself is acquainted. A competent Committee consisting of the most distinguished Artillery and Naval officers and the Director of Ordnance were unanimous in recommending the purchase by the Government of this invention. When the right hon. Gentleman speaks of the House having been misled into purchasing this invention, it must be borne in mind that a very full discussion took place, and that Gentlemen who differ as widely from the Government as the hon. Member for Galway and the hon. Member for King's County very cordially supported the proposal to purchase this invention. With regard to what the hon. Gentleman the Member for Cardiff (Sir Edward Reed) has said, I may remind him that the money is borne entirely on the Army Votes, and that the torpedo is undoubtedly purchased on the responsibility of the Army, rather as a land defence than to be used by the Navy, although, I think it is possible and probable it will be useful for the Navy.

Sir EDWARD REED: It does seem to me extraordinary, that after we have heard to-night of a redistribution of responsibility in the War Department under which the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War and his Successors are to be responsible for all the offices, we should be asked to vote a large sum of public money for a thing the right hon. Gentleman has never seen and knows nothing about.

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Does the hon. Gentleman really suppose my opinion on a matter of engineering like the construction of a torpedo would be worth anything whatever?

Sir EDWARD REED: I think the right hon. Gentleman's opinion as to whether an article is worth £110,000 would be in the highest degree valuable.

Mr. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E.): The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War seems to attach little importance to the opposition to the Brennan torpedo. When last we went to a Division on this question, we had one of the strongest supporters of the right hon. Gentleman, and also a great military authority—namely, the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Holborn (Colonel Duncan) with us. I think that is a little set off to some of the authorities quoted by the right hon. Gentleman this evening. I hope my right hon. Friend the Member for Central Bradford will take us again through the Division Lobby against this expenditure. I do not profess to be an authority upon the subject, yet I do confess that upon the evidence there is nothing to justify the enormous expenditure which it is proposed to incur in respect to this torpedo.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(17.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £130,600, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge for Establishments for Military Education, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888."

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I wish to call attention to the position of the head master and second master of the Royal Hibernian Military School in Dublin, under the Royal Warrant of 1884. The case rests upon paragraph 489 of the Royal Warrant, and this paragraph was devised on the report of Lord Morley's Committee, in order to meet admitted grievances of the officers who served in this establishment. The paragraph provides that the head master of the Royal Hibernian Military School shall be paid £250 a-year, increasing by £25 every five years to £350; that is a quinquennial increment. But the head master has been treated under the Warrant as if he were a new comer and not a gentleman of 39 years' service. I maintain, that under this Warrant the past services of this gentleman ought to be taken into account. The second master was intended by this Warrant to receive a salary of £150, rising gradually to £180. This gentleman had 13 years' service, and therefore was entitled to the maximum salary. He has been treated exactly as if he entered the service upon the day the Warrant was issued. This, of course, nullified the object of the paragraph. Now, the civilian masters at Chelsea have received the value of the Warrant. Lord Sandhurst visited the Royal Hibernian Military School last year, and he stated, that in his opinion the masters I have referred to had just claim to the reform they desired. The Board of Governors of the school have admitted the justice of the claim of these men. The second master in the Dublin School is placed in an absurd position, as well as a damaging one to himself. While he is the second master the third and fourth masters receive higher salaries than he does, simply because their full service is reckoned under the paragraph and his is ignored. I ask that the first and second masters be given the increments to which they are entitled on their service, and that the arrears be paid to them. I beg to move the reduction of the Vote by £250, being the arrears of pay to which these masters are entitled.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £130,350, be granted for the said Services."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. BRODRICK) (Surrey, Guildford) (who was indistinctly heard) was understood to say that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would undertake to see that no injustice was done in the case of the masters of the Royal Hibernian Military School, but that the same rule would be applied to this case as was applied to other cases. The hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton) ought to bear in mind that the masters at Chelsea, and those at the Royal Hibernian School, were appointed under totally different circumstances.

MR. SEXTON: The object of the Royal Warrant of 1884 was to remedy grievances which existed. If the Warrant is not to be a nullity, so far as the masters of the Hibernian Military School are concerned, the service they have actually given must be recognized. The Head Master at Chelsea has served eight years, and he has received two increments. He has received every penny of value. The Head Master at the Dublin School has served five times as long as the Chelsea Head Master, and yet he has only received one increment. Is that justice or common sense? Surely the Head Master at Dublin ought to be placed at the maximum of his class? The three or four subordinate masters to the second masters receive higher salaries than he does, because every day of their services has been recognized. I really think a conclusive case is made out by these gentlemen. If the hon. Gentleman the Financial Secretary (Mr. Brodrick) will assure me that the Government will approach the case in the spirit in which Lord Sandhurst approached it—with a desire to do strict justice to these men—I will not press the matter further.

MR. BRODRICK: I will undertake to look into the matter; and if I can satisfy the hon. Gentleman I will certainly do so.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I should like to point out that the second master of the Royal Military Asylum actually gets more pay than the Head Master in the Royal Hibernian Military School. There must be a mistake somewhere.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): It is quite obvious that the gentlemen connected with establishments near the seat of Government have greater opportunities of pressing their claims upon the Secretary of State for War than those connected with distant establishments. The Government ought to seriously consider the case of the masters of the Hibernian School. Certainly, the Irish Members must persist in bringing it to the notice of the authorities. I trust we shall receive an assurance that the masters of the Hibernian School will be treated equally with those of the Chelsea Establishment.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I can assure the hon. Gentleman that we desire, as far as possible, that there should be no distinction in this matter. I will look into the subject, and if I see substantial reasons I will take the course suggested by the hon. Member.

MR. SEXTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman ascertain how it is that the third master gets a higher salary than the second master?

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

SIR FREDERICK FITZ-WYGRAM (Hants, Fareham): I wish to call the attention of the Committee and the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to the Vote for the Staff College. I have no intention to object to the Vote, because I think it may be useful, and, in some cases, necessary, to educate officers at the expense of the State. But I do object most strongly, and I think many others object, to the preference given to officers of the Staff College, in the matter of employment, over regimental officers, who might, perhaps, be equally, or much better, qualified. I am sure it is the wish of the Army that the best and ablest men should be employed; but, as I have said, I object to the preference given to officers because they are educated at the expense of the State. I say let there be fair play in this matter—make no difference as between the two classes of officers; and when there is a vacancy, by all means let it be filled by the man who is best qualified, whether he is from the Staff College or not.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think that this is relevant to the present Vote.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I have to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War if the case has been brought under his notice of the claim of the ridingmaster at the Royal Military College in respect of his military rank? The ridingmaster at Canterbury has been allowed his majority; but the ridingmaster at the Royal Military College, who is a man at least as competent, and of longer service, and, I believe, with higher pay, has been refused his majority. Now, I do not know on what ground that refusal is based, but the fact is so; and, as I am credibly informed, it is a matter of comment and some surprise throughout the Service.

MR. E. STANHOPE: This is a matter which, I think, ought not to be brought under the consideration of the Committee. I am sorry to say that I have been attacked by one or two men on this ground. One of them has done me the favour to make attacks upon me in my constituency, because I will not promote him to the rank of major. I shall be glad to deal with this matter when the time arrives; but I am bound to say that I cannot give any consideration to unfair pressure put upon me in connection with it in this House.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I certainly do not desire to put any unfair pressure upon the right hon. Gentleman in this House. I am not altogether in the same position as I should occupy if I belonged to the Party opposite, or to the Party of the late Government. There is a very good reason indeed why a Member of the Irish Party should not have any direct personal dealings with any Member of Her Majesty's Government. However high may be the personal esteem of hon. Gentlemen on these Benches for Her Majesty's present Advisers, there is good reason why we should shrink from having personal intercourse with Ministers.

Captain COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I rise to Order, Sir. I wish to know whether the hon. Gentleman is in Order in discussing on this Vote the relations of the Irish Party with Her Majesty's Government?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is not out of Order.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I was saying that there was a reason why I should abstain from making a private and personal communication, which, coming from any other Members than those of the Party to which I belong, would be quite right. I desire that all my communications with Her Majesty's Government should be across the floor of the House. I assure the right hon. Gentleman that I am not making this reference in the interest of the person concerned, who to me is only a name. I have made a note with respect to this particular Vote of what appears to me to be an anomaly. The persons I refer to are both doing precisely the same work; and, as a matter of fact, the ridingmaster at the Royal Military College has more important and more difficult work to do than the ridingmaster at Canterbury. I think, under the circumstances, that the strictures of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War were a little uncalled for; and I protest that in making my observations, and calling attention to the facts, I was not going beyond my plain duty.

Sir FREDERICK FITZ-WYGRAM: Having held the office of Inspector General of Cavalry, and being in some way responsible for the ridingmasters in the Army, I may explain that all young ridingmasters are trained at Canterbury, which has always been recognized as the head place for riding instruction. It was always the custom to give the position of major to the ridingmaster at Canterbury. But when, some years ago, the second commandant was reduced, the ridingmaster, being a major, became second commandant. This was thought undesirable; and, on the appointment of ridingmaster becoming vacant, the rank of major was not given. Subsequently a second commandant was appointed, and then it was decided to restore the ridingmaster at Canterbury to the position of major. At Canterbury the whole training of ridingmasters is carried out, and combined with that is the training of all Indian recruits. The present number of men at Canterbury in training is over 1,750, while the number taught at Sandhurst is 100 cadets and 25 Staff officers. The appointment of the officer at Sandhurst, who is an old and gallant soldier, was recommended by me.

Colonel NOLAN: I am rather inclined to protest against the doctrine lad down by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War. There seems to be here a tendency to mix two things which are entirely distinct. It is, no doubt, an improper thing for an officer personally to attack the Secretary of State for War, and circulate statements in his constituency; but for an officer to have his grievance righted in this House is a totally different thing, and otherwise we should lose control over the Army altogether. The position as between the House and the Army has not been defined for the last 200 years; but to say that an officer cannot have his grievances righted here, and that he is liable to be reprimanded by his commanding officer, is, as I have said, subversive of all control on the part of the House over the Army. There are, no doubt, some officers in the Army who think they can and ought to be allowed to manage the whole of the Service by themselves; but that, I contend, is a most mischievous doctrine. To say that any Minister or other person, no matter how high may be his position in the Army, should have this power, would be totally opposed to the spirit of the Constitution, and I must say that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War decidedly leads in that direction. The effect of preventing aggrieved officers stating their cases in this House will be very likely to bring about a more objectionable result—that is to say, they will bring forward their grievances in the public Press. From my own experience, I can say that the grievances of officers and others are, as a rule, stated in this House in a very temperate manner; and the Secretary of State for War has plenty of means of voting down the cases that are not properly stated. I must say that, having regard to these considerations, I protest against the doctrine laid down by the right hon. Gentleman that an officer of the Army is not to bring his grievance before the House of Commons.

GENERAL SIR GEORGE BALFOUR (Kincardine): In this Vote there is an item of £4,000, to be used as rewards to officers for acquiring proficiency in languages. I believe this is the fourth year in which a grant has been taken for this purpose in the Army Estimates. In the two first years only £2,000 was voted, and then only as a reward for passing in the Russian language; but, if I err not, none was spent. I spoke to the late Secretary of State about enlarging the number of languages, and wrote to the War Office suggesting the extension of the rewards. I am glad to find that the sum has been raised to £4,000, and that it can now be spent as rewards to officers for acquiring proficiency in all modern languages. I trust that the Arabic, Persian, and Turkish languages may be included. I also urge that the grant should be extended, and that non-commissioned officers and soldiers should be entitled to rewards for proficiency. In India all ranks of the Army are entitled to claim rewards for knowledge, and the money yearly expended is four or five times the sum now voted—upwards of £20,000; and, looking to the necessity which England may have of employing men of other nations as soldiers, it is good policy to train officers and men in acquiring knowledge of languages. Let me suggest that our Military Attaché at Berlin should report upon the arrangements lately made for encouraging the acquisition of languages by the military as well as by the civil community.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(18.) £48,200, Miscellaneous Effective Services.

LORD HENRY BRUCE (Wilts, Chippenham): I wish to make a few remarks to the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War with reference to the arms of the Service. We are told that we have two complete Army Corps ready to take the field. I positively deny that, Sir. We have at the present time three different kinds of rifles and three different kinds of ammunition. I contend that to have three different kinds of ammunition is like running two or three different omnibuses through Temple Bar——

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. E. STANHOPE) (Lincolnshire, Horncastle): I rise to Order, Sir. The subject on which the noble Lord is speaking has no connection with this Vote in any sense whatever.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is nothing in this Vote which concerns the supply of rifles; and the observations of the noble Lord are, therefore, not relevant.

LORD HENRY BRUCE: I regret that my reference to the rifles and ammunition is out of Order. I desire to point out that the Surveyor General of Stores under successive Governments has allowed the supply of stores to fall greatly too low. I think the Ordnance Committee are responsible for stores.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Ordnance Committee are not responsible for the supply of stores.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): On a point of Order, Sir, I ask whether there is not on this Vote a charge of £500 for officers engaged in special experimental services; and whether that does not cover the question of arms introduced into the Service?

MR. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir. It is not the case at all. This is solely for experimental purposes.

Vote *agreed to.*

(19.) £16,800, Rewards for Distinguished Services.

(20.) £76,000, Half Pay.

(21.) £127,600, Widows' Pensions, &c.

(22.) £15,200, Pensions for Wounds.

(23.) £31,400, Chelsea and Kilmainham Hospitals.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War (Mr. E. Stanhope) whether the scheme for the re-organization of the War

Office involves an alteration of the administration of Chelsea Hospital; and whether it is proposed to remove it to Pall Mall?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: No, Sir.

Vote *agreed to.*

(24.) £1,358,300, Out-Pensions.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.): I brought before a former Secretary of State for War the cases of some men who were discharged on account of ill-health without a pension, after 18 or 19 years' service. I was told at the time that the authorities had no power to deal with these cases, but that they were drafting a Bill to enable them to do so; since which time, now four years ago, I have heard nothing about the matter. I wish to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War to the position of these men, which I consider is a very hard one. When a man serves for 21 years he gets a pension of 1*s.* a-day; but here we have men discharged with 18 or 19 years' service who get no permanent pension at all. It is true, they get an allowance for a short time; but I do not know any worse principle than to give a man a pension for four or five years only. I have met with many cases of this kind where men have been left without the means of subsistence, in my capacity as Member of Parliament, and particularly in respect of being Chairman of a Poor Law Union. These cases occur all over the Kingdom and in every constituency, and I have in my mind one of a particularly distressing character. I believe the Secretary of State for War has no power to grant permanent pensions to men discharged after this long service, if the full period of 21 years has not been served. I think it is a great shame that the Secretary of State for War should not have this power. There are, no doubt, many of these men who think they have been defrauded in this respect, and I think so too. They expect to get pensions after long service, and there is no doubt that when they find that they are not to have them a great deal of discontent arises. I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will tell us what the present state of the law is with regard to this—whether he can give a pension after 17 or 18 years' service, when he discharges men against their will; and, if not, I think he ought to tell us that he is going to take powers for the purpose.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY, WAR DEPARTMENT (Mr. Brodrick) (Surrey, Guildford): In reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I confess that I do not quite understand how such cases as he has referred to can have arisen, because I certainly think it is in the power of the Secretary of State for War to give pensions to soldiers discharged for ill-health after 17 or 18 years' service. I am not quite certain that we have power to give permanent pensions straight off; but, presumably, if a man is discharged for ill-health, he ultimately gets his pension. I must say that commanding officers, as a rule, are most kind and considerate in allowing men, as far as they are able, to complete their full period of service.

Colonel NOLAN: Is the limit 17 or 18 years, or am I to understand that after 15 or 16 years' service there is power to give these men pensions? Of course, we know that soldiers are nearly always protected by their commanding officers in the way the hon. Gentleman speaks of; but we have to remember that the men whose cases we are considering do not belong to the regiments in which they served.

Mr. BRODRICK: There is power first of all to give a temporary pension, and I believe that there are cases in which a permanent pension after 15 years' service has been given.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): There are, within my knowledge, several cases of men in the North of Ireland who have been retired from the Army, and which I should wish to lay before the right hon. Gentleman. Not being an expert in these matters, I would ask whether, if I submit the particulars of a case in writing, after proper investigation, the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War will look into it and give the result at his convenience?

Mr. E. STANHOPE: Yes, Sir.

Vote *agreed to.*

(25.) £183,300, Superannuation Allowances.

(26.) £47,100, Retired Allowances, &c. to Officers of the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteer Forces.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

WAYS AND MEANS.

COMMITTEE.

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, the sum of £34,242,209 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom."

MR. CLANCY (Dublin, Co., N.): I intend at this stage, Sir, to draw attention to the treatment of the Irish tobacco manufacturers; but because the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) said——

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the hon. Member could introduce this subject on Report of the Customs Vote. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is here himself now.

MR. CLANCY: I am glad the right hon. Gentleman has just come in, because I am going to bring forward a question relating to Irish tobacco manufacture. I have been asked by persons interested in this trade to bring the matter I am about to deal with under the notice of the Committee; and I think that when the Committee have heard the facts which I have to lay before them they will come to the conclusion that a very gross act of injustice has been perpetrated upon an Irish trade which deserved better treatment at the hands of the present Government—indeed, at the hands of any Government of this country.

THE CHAIRMAN: I understand the point the hon. Gentleman is going to raise is a question connected with the administration of the Excise Department.

MR. CLANCY: I am going to object to a Vote proposed for that Department on certain grounds.

THE CHAIRMAN: Then it will be appropriate for the hon. Member to do that on the Report of the Vote for that Department, which will come on in the course of a few minutes.

MR. CLANCY: Would it not be possible to take the discussion now?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is not appropriate to this Vote.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.—REPORT.

Resolutions [7th September] *reported.*

First Three Resolutions *agreed to.*

Fourth Resolution read a second time.

CAPTAIN COLOMB (Tower Hamlets, Bow, &c.): I should like, before this proceeds further, to ask for some information as to the increase of the Vote for the Naval Intelligence Department on page 27 of the Estimates. In doing that I wish to say I most cordially thank the Admiralty for the increase they have made to that Department. It was very much wanted, and I am delighted to see that there is an increase in the numbers, and also an increase in the charge. But I also wish to know what is the net increase in the salaries of the officers already in the Department? Last year the number was four, and the cost £1,322 — the cost of the whole Department; but this year the number is 10, and the total cost £5,483. I understand that the head of the Department received £500 a-year with half-pay, and that part of this increase is due to the fact that the £500 a-year he received has been doubled, and that he still gets his half-pay, so that in this Vote we have not the whole facts as to the costs of the Department. I should like to know what course the Admiralty intend to take; is not this a large addition to the salaries already paid?

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON) (Middlesex, Ealing): The hon. and gallant Gentleman said that he would put this question to me on Report of the Half-Pay Vote.

CAPTAIN COLOMB: I am very sorry if I misled the noble Lord. I said that I did not see how on the Half-Pay Vote we should discuss this question, and therefore I would raise it on Report of Supply.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I did not expect the matter to come on, and therefore am not prepared for the discussion.

CAPTAIN COLOMB: Then I will defer my observations to the Half-Pay Vote.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Remaining Resolution *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES. —REPORT.

Resolutions [6th September] *reported.*

First Eight Resolutions *agreed to.*

Ninth Resolution read a second time.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (Donegal, E.): I desire to move the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £59, being the amount over-paid to Lord Lingen, the late Secretary to the Treasury. Sir, the Treasury is an Office which is very strict in interpreting Regulations and Acts of Parliament in respect of the claim of Civil servants in subordinate positions; but when it comes to the question of the interests of Members of the Treasury Office itself, or when it is a question of personal interests of high-placed Civil servants in any of the principal Offices of the State, then we find that a totally different standard is applied in gauging the merits or claims of individuals. It is easy to dismiss Dockyard labourers without pensions. It is easy to re-organize an office of secondary importance, and get rid of a number of lowly placed men on terms which inflict great hardship on the majority of them; but no case of re-organization of the Secretary of State's Office has been heard of in which the Heads of that Office were not materially benefited by the change, and no system of retirement in the Secretary of State's Office, or in the Treasury itself, has yet come under public notice in which the officers concerned were not treated in the most liberal manner. But, Sir, in the case of Lord Lingen an exceptionally strong course was taken by the Secretary in dealing with the claim for pension. Lord Lingen is an officer of 38 years' service. When he retired the other day he was entitled, under the ordinary Rules of the Service, to draw a pension equal to 38-60ths of his last year's salary; but instead of that the Treasury gave him a pension equal to two-thirds of his salary, and they attempted to justify the increased amount by representing that many years ago he had acted as an Examiner. Now, at the time he so acted there was no power in the Treasury to take into account the special qualifications which he possessed in that character with a view to an increase in his pension. But in the Superannuation Act of 1859 a clause—Clause 4—was introduced which provided that it should be lawful for the Examiners of the Treasury from time to time to appoint persons possessing professional or other peculiar qualities not ordinarily acquired in the Public Service at a later period than the rule which ordinarily obtained in the Service. Now, what did the Treasury do when Lord Lingen retired? They bethought themselves of the fact that he had years before been an Examiner in a Public Department, and they made that clause of the Act of 1859 and the Order made under it retrospective. That was really going beyond the intentions of the Act. The increased allowance to Lord Lingen was objected by the Comptroller and Auditor General in the following words:—

> "This sub-head also includes the pension of £1,668 13*s.* 4*d.*, equivalent to 40-60ths of salary on retirement, granted to Lord Lingen, late Permanent Secretary to the Treasury. Lord Lingen's actual service amounted to 38 years, to which had been added the years on account of professional qualification as an Examiner in the Education Department. Under the Treasury Warrant of 1863, issued in accordance with the terms of Clause 4 of the Superannuation Act of 1859, as Lord Lingen had ceased to be an Examiner the three years before the issue of this Warrant, and as I have been advised that the Warrant issued under this Act is not retrospective in its action, I feel constrained to take exception to that portion of the pension allowed in respect of these two years; and I am, therefore, unable to consider that the sum of £57 0*s.* 9*d.* paid an account thereof during the year 1885-6 as properly charged against the Vote."

Well, Sir, the matter having been reported upon by the Comptroller and Auditor General, it came before the Public Accounts Committee; and the Chairman asked a question of Mr. Hamilton, the Representative of the Treasury in the matter. Mr. Hamilton's answer was—

> "It is a question, as to the interpretation of the Treasury Warrant, as to whether a retrospective effect should be given under that Warrant or not."

It was thought at the time at the Treasury that a retrospective effect should be given to it. This Treasury officer said—

> "I think wrongfully so; and I think that the Comptroller and Auditor General is quite right in his contention that the Treasury had no business to give retrospective effect to that Warrant. But so far as this particular case is concerned it would have had no material effect; because, considering what the services of Lord Lingen have been to the State, the Treasury would probably not have hesitated in submitting a case to Parliament for a special pension. Therefore, the difficulty would have been got over in that way had he not made up his official service of 40 years."

Then Mr. Hamilton is asked—"That is, if Parliament had taken the same view as the Treasury officials?" "No;" he said—

> "The 9th section of the Superannuation Act gives the Treasury power to grant pensions for special services without the special consent of Parliament."

Then he was further asked—

> "And if the Treasury had a discretionary authority which they desired to obtain, they would, in that case, have allowed the full pension?"

His answer was—

> "They would have allowed the full pension; but they would have stated the facts to Parliament with a full explanation."

A further question put was this—

> "If I understand you aright, you admit that the contention of the Comptroller and Auditor General is correct, that the Warrant under which it is sought to cover this higher pension in reality has no retrospective effect, and ought not to have any retrospective effect?"

Mr. Hamilton's reply was, "That is so." Then the situation is simply this—that the Treasury, in order to serve Lord Lingen, a Treasury official, give a retrospective effect to a Warrant which, in point of fact, has no retrospective effect at all. On the strength of that Warrant they have given him a pension to which he is entitled; but they say—"If we are not entitled to do it in one way, then, at any rate, under another clause of the Act we could, if he had proceeded under it, have been able to effect the same object by laying a special statement before Parliament as to the eminent services rendered by Lord Lingen to the Treasury." But, Sir, the Treasury has not been able to, or at any rate in point of fact, to lay before Parliament this detailed statement of the eminent services of Lord Lingen. Therefore they are not entitled, under Section 9 of the Act in question, to give the special pension, neither are they entitled under Clause 4, and the Warrant issued under its provisions, to give him the larger pension which has been objected to by the Comptroller and Auditor General. The pension, therefore, which is paid to Lord Lingen is clearly illegal. I venture to contend that not only is it illegal, but that it is also improper and altogether indecorous and unseemly. I desire to speak with all due respect of Lord Lingen. He is a gentleman who has been in the Civil Service for a long time, and he has discharged his duties presumably to the best of his power; but I do protest against the Treasury coming forward and claiming that Lord Lingen, in his long career in the Public Service, has manifested any special qualification whatsoever which justified any exceptional treatment of him in the shape of pension. But I say, further than that, that the giving to Lord Lingen of a pension to which he is not legally entitled, at the same time that you treat in so inconsiderate and harsh a manner unimportant members of the Civil Service, can only result in one thing, and that is a deepening conviction in the Civil Service that the Service is not properly worked or supervised; but that it is worked harshly, and that it is worked unjustly—I do not say corruptly—in respect of men in high positions. Lord Lingen was in a high position—he was at headquarters. He, of all men in the Service, signalized himself for years by the harshness and the stringency with which he treated everybody in the Civil Service. If there was any possibility of cutting down an allowance, if there was any means of construing the Regulations in a niggardly spirit, Lord Lingen was sure to adopt that view. The whole of his record is of the same description. The whole of his reputation, however well-established, after years of experience through the various branches of administration, can leave no ground for doubt as to the tone of thought in respect of appointments of Civil servants generally, unless they happen to hold high places. His own case came in for consideration, and what do we find? Why, that a mere job has been perpetrated in his favour—a job which, if it had been perpetrated in respect of someone else, Lord Lingen would have been the first to object to. What is there to be said in justification of what has been done? Absolutely nothing. The thing is illegal, the thing is improper, and is calculated to work very unjustly upon every rank of the Civil Service. Under these circumstances, I admit that it is a very invidious thing to do, because I have had personal relations with Lord Lingen. Still, I do not think it right that a statement of this kind, involving a charge of the nature I have described, should be allowed to pass without challenge in this House; and, therefore, I beg to move the reduction of this Vote. I do not know exactly the proper way to put my Motion; but I think the Question is, "That this House agree with the Committee in the said Resolution." If I am in Order I will move that the House do require the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £59.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£246,082," and insert "£246,023."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That '£246,082' stand part of the Resolution."

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): Sir, the hon. Gentleman who has raised this question has made use of some very strong language, and has insinuated that the pension granted to Lord Lingen was granted to him, not on account of his services, nor on account of the justice of the case, but because he was a Treasury officer. Sir, I believe that charges, if I may call them so—more unfounded insinuations founded on a less basis—never were made in this House. The hon. Member has said that the Comptroller and Auditor General called attention to this matter, and he has recited the circumstances in which the Comptroller and Auditor General did so; but the hon. Member did not represent what the Public Accounts Committee stated in answer to the Comptroller and Auditor General. The Public Accounts Committee, in considering the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General, stated in their Report in regard to Lord Lingen's pension that the point as to whether this sum of £57 0*s.* 9*d.* was a proper charge turned upon the question as to whether a retrospective effect could be given to the Treasury Warrant or not. The Treasury agreed with the Comptroller and Auditor General that it was not competent for them to give retrospective effect to the Treasury Warrant in this particular instance. However, the matter was not of substantial importance, as Lord Lingen's services would, no doubt, have warranted the Treasury in granting him a special pension. Therefore, it was not merely a question of opinion in the Treasury, but it was the opinion of the Public Accounts Committee, who considered the Comptroller and Auditor's objection, that the Treasury would have been justified in granting a special pension to Lord Lingen for his services. The hon. Member made use of these words—"That the Treasury bethought themselves of this old Warrant." I am sorry that the hon. Member said that. The facts are very simple. Lord Lingen has, I believe, left a reputation at the Treasury which will live long after him, for his strictness which the hon. Member has alluded to, but strictness in defence of the public purse. He has left a reputation for his strictness and impartiality in the administration of the onerous duties he was called upon to discharge. Sir, Lord Lingen had a set and determined opposition against special pensions. Lord Lingen interpreted special pensions to mean, not pensions which were earned, even although excellently well done, but all services which were special and outside the limit of any particular sphere of duty. Lord Lingen did not claim any special pension; but, following the precedents which had been set before—and I would wish to call the hon. Member's attention to this in proof of what I have stated that it was not that the Treasury bethought themselves of this old Warrant—following the precedent set in Sir Francis Sandford's case——

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Which is now admitted to be wrong.

MR. JACKSON: Which the hon. Gentleman has now admitted to be wrong in Lord Lingen's case; but I am pointing out that the pension given to Lord Lingen was not, as the hon. Gentleman suggests, given with the desire to serve him, and it was not that they bethought themselves of this Warrant when the case came under consideration; but the Treasury in the matter were following a precedent which up to that time had never been questioned, and to which no objection had been taken.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: It was not known.

MR. JACKSON: It was not known; but pensions of this kind had been granted, and had come before the Comptroller and Auditor General, and had passed him. I want to emphasize this point—that the Treasury acted upon precedent, which up to that time had never been questioned, and which the Treasury at that time believed to be perfectly legal. I do not desire to prolong this discussion. I believe that everybody who has come in contact with Lord Lingen, or who knows anything about his services, will endorse the opinion of the Public Accounts Committee that those services would have justified a special pension. But, Sir, we are not responsible—the Government of that day are responsible for this. I have felt it my duty to say this, because I honestly believe that a Public Service never had a more faithful or diligent servant than it had in Lord Lingen. Lord Lingen's service at the time he retired was 38 years and nine months. Therefore it was a little more than the hon. Member has stated. I have pointed out that the precedent was followed which, up to that time, had never been questioned; and I believe that had it been proposed to us, as has been suggested by the hon. Member, it would have received the unanimous endorsement of the House. Sir, I should just like to say, further, that the pension which was awarded to Lord Lingen was endorsed with these words—

> "After the honour which, on gracious acceptance of my advice, Her Majesty has now conferred on Sir Ralph Lingen, I need not supply any less emphatic testimony of his pre-eminent merits."

That was signed, or rather initialed, "W. E. G."

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Very properly, no doubt.

MR. JACKSON: So far as my knowledge goes, and so far as my experience of the short tenure of the Office I now hold enables me to form an opinion, I am justified in saying that Lord Lingen most thoroughly deserves a pension. The hon. Member questions the pension to the extent of £59. He questions it, I make no doubt, on principle. He questions it, I believe, altogether apart from personal considerations.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Certainly, Sir.

MR. JACKSON: Well, I have endeavoured to point out that his insinuation that the Treasury have dealt with this case in a special manner, because of Lord Lingen's special connection with the Treasury, is not warranted or justified; and I have endeavoured to show that the Treasury at that time, in acting as they did, and in granting the pension which was given to Lord Lingen, and interpreting the Warrant with the Office which he had previously held, and which the hon. Gentleman knows was subsequently put upon the list of officers entitled to seven years' service on account of professional qualifications—I have endeavoured to show that the Treasury, in acting in this way, were acting upon precedent. They did not make a precedent to serve the particular case of Lord Lingen; and I honestly believe that they acted, as they thought at the time, in strict accordance with the law. I am certain of this—that, at any rate, they acted in strict accordance with the merits of the case.

SIR EDWARD REED (Cardiff): I cannot allow the fact that a complimentary Minute initialed "W. E. G." — the initials of the late Prime Minister (Mr. W. E. Gladstone)—should weigh with me to the extent of barring me from expressing my conviction that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has given no satisfactory answer to the question raised by the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor). I admit that the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has given an answer to some of the incidental observations made by the hon. Member; but he has given no answer as to the merits of the case; on the contrary, he has set an example which, I confess, I never expected to find set in this House by a Secretary to the Treasury. I never expected to find a Secretary to the Treasury rising in his place to defend the appropriation of an excessive pension to a public officer without any recognition or legal authority whatever.

MR. JACKSON: I beg the hon. Baronet's pardon. That which I defended was sanctioned by Parliament adopting the Public Accounts Committee's Report.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: That is not absolute.

SIR EDWARD REED: That was a very indirect sanction. It was acknowledged that the form in which the pension was given, and the grounds on which it was given, were illegal.

MR. JACKSON: It was afterwards discovered to be illegal.

SIR EDWARD REED: Well, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury says it was afterwards discovered to be illegal.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): No; highly irregular.

SIR EDWARD REED: Well, highly irregular—I am satisfied with that; but, then, one would have thought that there would have been some step taken to set it right and make it legal and proper. In Committee in this House, over and over again, we have Ministers rising and expressing their inability to strain any point in the slightest degree in favour of the widows and families of poor men who have died in the Public Service; but here we have the Secretary to the Treasury rising at midnight and saying that when, in the case of a high official, they have discovered that he has received an improper pension, they have taken no steps to put it right, and do not intend to do so. That is a state of things which I must say I never expected to hear in this House from a responsible officer of the Treasury.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I have heard the hon. Gentleman with some surprise. It is the practice in the Public Service, and the law of the Public Service, that the Public Accounts should be referred to the Comptroller and Auditor General, and that his Report on these accounts shall be dealt with by the Committee of Public Accounts, which has the authority to allow or disallow, to enforce or the contrary, the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General. In this respect, the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has read out the 77th Article of the Report of the Committee of Public Accounts, in which they refuse to disallow the item in question. They distinctly assert that in this particular instance the matter is not of substantial importance, as Lord Lingen's services would, no doubt, have warranted the Treasury in granting him a special pension. Does the hon. Baronet suggest that it is the duty of the Government to go behind, and to act, independently of, the Report of the Committee of Public Accounts, which is set up by this House as a protection to the public purse, and as a special tribunal to deal with the Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General? Why, it would be an act most extraordinary in itself, and which has never, to my knowledge, been attempted to be done by any Government or Party. Reference has been made to the services of Lord Lingen, but it must be borne in mind that Lord Lingen is not a Member of the Party to which the present Government belongs. It must be borne in mind that Lord Lingen did not receive his pension from this Government—that the pension was not granted by a Treasury to which any Member of the present Government belonged at that time. The Treasury which granted the pension consisted of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lothian (Mr. W. E. Gladstone), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby (Sir William Harcourt), and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton (Mr. Henry H. Fowler); and I certainly do not accuse any of these right hon. Gentlemen of any desire to deal lightly with the public purse. I believe they had as great a regard for the public purse as we claim to have on this side of the House; but they also had an intimate knowledge of the distinguished services of Lord Lingen.

Sir EDWARD REED: Let me point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the Members of the Treasury to whom he refers were, at the time of the granting of the pension, ignorant of the fact that the thing should not be retrospective.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: They granted it in good faith, no doubt, and in recognition of the valuable services of Lord Lingen. Then the fact transpires that the particular form and method in which it has been granted was open to some doubt, and the whole subject is referred to the Comptroller and Auditor General and to the Committee of Public Accounts, and the Committee of Public Accounts took upon themselves the responsibility of saying that the matter was not one of substantial importance. Does the hon. Member desire to pass a censure on the Committee of Public Accounts, and to say that they have neglected their duty—a majority, or, at any rate, some of them, were neglectful of their duty—to the country, and ought not to have inserted that paragraph in their Report? I believe that substantial justice has been done, and that Lord Lingen's pension has been fully and entirely merited. I served with Lord Lingen at the Treasury during three or four years, and I can bear testimony to his zeal and his devotion to the Public Service. I believe the Public Service never had a servant more thoroughly devoted to their interests than Lord Lingen was in every way; and though it has been remarked that Lord Lingen was indifferent to the claims of the humbler servants of the Crown——

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I did not say that.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I think the hon. Gentleman, at least, implied that Lord Lingen had administered the Department very severely.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will do me the justice to refer to my words if they have been taken down.

MR. W. H. SMITH: I did not take down the hon. Gentleman's words; but I do not think I am misrepresenting him when I say that the impression made by his words was that he believed Lord Lingen to have been harsh and severe and strict in his administration where poor men were concerned. Well, Sir, for my own part, I can bear testimony, through intimate acquaintance with Lord Lingen in the daily administration of his Office, to this—that when any hard cases came before him, and the interests of the persons in question were represented to him, he was as humane and considerate as it was possible for a man to be. But I admit—and I think that in this he did no more than his duty—that he insisted on the strict performance of duty, and that he did hold the purse-strings tightly when he thought that an attempt was being made to do an injustice to the country whose servant he was. Never, Sir, has there been a more careful or a more devoted public servant; and if a mistake has been made technically in the form and manner in which this pension has been granted to him, it is abundantly covered by the verdict of the tribunal which the House of Commons has just set up.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I feel called upon, as a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, to make a few remarks upon this question. I cannot endorse the special pleading which has been given to us by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) in connection with this particular question. I may state that I do not know the merits of Lord Lingen, not having his personal acquaintance. I am not acquainted with the services he has rendered to the State; but I take my position on the ground that we ought to do nothing irregular or illegal. This question should be settled on that basis. I attended the meetings of the Public Accounts Committee most regularly; but I am bound to say that when the Committee came to consider the question of Lord Lingen's pension I was, unhappily, called away to Scotland in consequence of domestic affliction. But the hon. Member for East Donegal (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) and myself had resolved to oppose the decision of the Committee so far as this Vote was concerned, and we should have done so if we had been present. The Report was, however, sanctioned in my absence, and I believe in the absence of the hon. Member for East Donegal. I do not want to dispute the matter so far as the amount is concerned; but I hold that we are not justified in pressing this Vote on in an illegal manner, even though it has been sanctioned by the Report of the Public Accounts Committee; and I wish, as a Member of the Public Accounts Committee, to state most distinctly that with regard to that particular matter I entirely disagree with it, and that I do that on the ground of principle simply. I do not suppose that this small sum of money which Lord Lingen is to receive can be set against his valuable services; but I mean to say that we ought to do things in a legal and lawful and proper manner, either with respect to the highly-paid servants or the lowly-paid servants—in regard to public officials or in connection with servants of the Houses of Parliament. If this Motion comes to a Division, I shall certainly move to strike out this amount, and I shall do so on the ground of principle, because I cannot agree with the Vote, although a Member of the Public Accounts Committee. There is no Department connected with this House which is not amenable to Parliament; and I think that if the Public Accounts Committee has done wrong, the House has a perfect right to refuse to sanction its decision.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): It is not often that we find the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury in a melting mood; but I thought, if I may say so, that there was quite a tear in his voice while he was referring to the services of Lord Lingen. As an old Civil Service official, I cordially and heartily admit that Lord Lingen was a good public servant. But I venture to think that Lord Lingen cannot possibly complain that his services have not been recognized by the State; and it is absurd to say that he performed anything which deserves the name of special service. We have been told—and it is quite true—that Lord Lingen was a strict steward of the public purse; and I think that, when his own claim came to be considered, to imitate his strictness would have been the best compliment which could have been paid to him. I am not at all surprised at the conduct of the Treasury in this matter. It is quite consistent with their settled policy, which appears to be based upon a misreading of a Scripture text—

> "Unto him that hath shall be given, and unto him that hath not even that which he seemeth to have shall be taken away."

I sincerely hope that the hon. Member for East Donegal will go to a Division on this matter, and if he does I shall have the greatest pleasure in supporting him.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE (Worcester, Evesham): I am unwilling to intrude myself upon the House at this late hour; but, having been a Member of the Committee of Public Accounts, I cannot, after what has been said, consent to give a silent vote. Sir, this question was most carefully considered by that Committee. The hon. Member for East Donegal, who has introduced this question, was not himself present when the subject was discussed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: The Committee on that particular occasion, instead of meeting at 2 o'clock, as was usual, took a Sitting at half-past 12, at which hour it was impossible for me to attend.

Sir RICHARD TEMPLE: I regret that we had not the advantage of the attendance of the hon. Member for East Donegal, and of the hon. Member for Mid Lanark (Mr. Mason); but I can assure them both, and I can assure the House, that the question was most carefully considered by the Committee. I wish the hon. Baronet the Member for London University (Sir John Lubbock), who was Chairman on that occasion, were here to bear me out in what I say. I quite admit, in reference to what has been said by the hon. Member for Mid Lanark, that this question ought to be considered strictly with reference to legality. I submit to the House that we considered it in that light. We were aware of the illegality which had occurred, and which was then specifically discussed; but, on the other hand, we were guided by this consideration—that had that irregularity been known at the time it would have been rectified, because the Treasury had power to grant special pensions. We were thus cognizant of all that has been brought forward by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury this evening—namely, the eminent services which Lord Lingen had for a long series of years rendered to the State; and we thought it would not be worthy of the Representatives of a great nation to raise any further question in the case of such a distinguished servant, especially considering that no real breach of the Regulations had occurred.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 109; Noes 25: Majority 84. [12.15 p.m.]

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Aird, J.
Ambrose, W.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Blundell, Col. H. B. H.
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Boord, T. W.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burghley, Lord
Caldwell, J.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Courtney, L. H.
Davenport, H. T.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elton, C. I.
Evelyn, W. J.
Ewart, W.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fetcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gedge, S.
Gibson, J. G.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gray, C. W.
Grimston, Viscount
Hall, C.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Hamilton, Col. C. E.
Hamley, Gen. Sir E. B.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hoare, S.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Hornby, W. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jackson, W. L.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kimber, H.

King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Long, W. H.
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, rt. hon. J. H. A.
Maclure, J. W.
Marriott, rt. hn. W. T.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Milvain, T.
Mount, W. G.
Murdoch, C. T.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Parker, hon. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Pyne, J. D.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rasch, Major F. C.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Robertson, W. T.
Round, J.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C.
Talbot, J. G.
Temple, Sir R.
Tollemache, H. J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Weymouth, Viscount
Whitmore, C. A.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Biggar, J. G.
Carew, J. L.
Clancy, J. J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cossham, H.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Hunter, W. A.
Kelly, J. R.
M'Arthur, W. A.
Nolan, Colonel J. P.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, P.
O'Connor, J. (Tipperary)
O'Kelly, J.
Pickersgill, E. H.
Provand, A. D.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Rowlands, J.
Sexton, T.
Stack, J.
Stanhope, hon. P. J.
Stewart, H.
Sullivan, D.
Woodall, W.

TELLERS.
Mason, S.
O'Connor, A.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Tenth to Seventeenth Resolutions *agreed to.*

Eighteenth Resolution—

"That a sum, not exceeding £651,848, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Customs Department"

—read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I rise to urge on Her Majesty's Government that inquiry should be held into the case of the chief officer of the steamship *City of Bristol,* who has been dismissed from his employment in consequence of the discovery of contraband cigars in the ship. And I wish, further, to ask on what ground the Government refuse to refund the sum of £20 exacted from the owners of the vessel? I would point out that the officer in question, who has always borne a respectable character, who has been for 30 years in the Merchant Service, and whom the owners believe to be perfectly innocent, has been utterly ruined in consequence of the representations of the Customs Authorities; and I ask the Government to make inquiry into the circumstances, so that, if possible, he may be restored without delay. I now come to the question of the Customs Authorities in their dealing with Belfast as a Customs port. From inquiries I have made, I find the treatment of the port is unfair in the extreme. I have received a letter from a man of experience in the trade of Belfast, and he states that the regulations of the Customs Department constitute a considerable obstruction to the development of the foreign trade of the port. Another statement is that foreign merchants do not consign cargoes to the port to the extent that they would if the Customs arrangements were better. And, further, not long ago I brought to the notice of the House the case of a firm whose contribution to the revenue was £26,000 a-year, and whose trade had doubled, but who were obliged to make many applications to the Customs Authorities before they could get permission to open a bonded store. The Customs revenue from Belfast has quadrupled in 30 years. The revenue of last year exceeded that of the previous year by £130,000; and, in spite of that, the Government added only £500 or £600 a-year to the Customs establishment of the port. Now, Belfast is the third port in the United Kingdom in point of contribution to the revenue; it comes next after London and Liverpool. London gives £10,000,000 to the Customs revenue, and the establishment costs £325,000; Liverpool gives £3,100,000, and the establishment costs £98,000; Belfast comes next with its revenue of £1,600,000 a-year, and what is the present establishment? It is represented by £15,000. The first comparison I make is that in London the cost of collecting the Customs revenue is 3·11; Liverpool, 3.10; and in Belfast it is 0·9; so that every pound of revenue collected in London costs for its collection three and a-half times what it costs in Belfast, and similarly with Liverpool. I want to have it made clear to me why the collection of £1 of revenue at London and Liverpool costs three and a-half times as much as it costs in Belfast. I maintain that the amount of revenue ought to be a sort of finger post or guide in respect of the cost of the establishment at a port, unless some overwhelming objection is advanced to that principle. After Belfast, the next ports in respect of revenue contribution are Bristol and Glasgow. It has been stated that Belfast derived its Customs revenue almost entirely from one article; but that statement is not correct, because it has a large revenue from spirits and general Customs. But what is to be said in the case of Bristol; where would Bristol be were it not for the duty on tobacco? The revenue of Bristol is £1,000,000, and that of Belfast is £1,600,000. Yet the Customs establishment costs £16,238, and Belfast only gets £15,000; so that every £1 of revenue at the former port costs twice as much to collect as the same amount costs at the latter. The revenue at Bristol is easily collected, and neither in respect of the number of articles imported, nor the amount of revenue, is the port on the same footing as Belfast. Then I take the case of Glasgow, which yields £1,000,000 in revenue, and I ask what amount is spent on the establishment? It is £23,000; so that every £1 of revenue collected there costs two and a-half times as much as in Belfast. The revenue at Hull is £116,000 a-year; the Customs establishment there costs £20,000, and the cost of the collection of revenue is 20 times greater than the collection at Belfast. Now, with regard to Dublin. It has been alleged in the case of Belfast that the reason why the Customs establishment there is so small is that the foreign trade there is limited. No doubt, in comparison with the foreign trade at large ports, it is limited, and so is the foreign trade of Dublin; in that respect they both stand on an equality; and, therefore, if the limited extent of its foreign trade were an argument against Belfast, the argument would apply to Dublin. The revenue of Dublin is £850,000 a-year, and the cost of the Customs establishment there is £15,127; so that every £1 of revenue collected at Dublin costs twice as much as at Belfast. Here, then, are two ports in Ireland, with the same amount of foreign trade, and we have the Customs establishment at one as nearly as possible double what it is at the other. My argument is that Dublin, which stands on an equality with Belfast in point of foreign trade, and at a disparity of one-half in point of revenue, has the same Customs establishment. Leith resembles Belfast, inasmuch as half its revenue is derived from spirits and half from general Customs; its Customs revenue is £500,000, and the cost of the Customs establishment there is £14,600; so that every £1 of revenue collected at Leith costs three times as much as at Belfast. I have now shown that Belfast stands in the third position in respect of revenue, and only seventh in point of establishment, and what I want is an explanation of this discrepancy. How is it that for every 1*s.* you spend in Belfast you spend relatively £1 in Hull? Now, the Port of Cork resembles Belfast in having a small foreign trade. It yields £148,000 a-year to the revenue, and its Customs establishment costs £6,800; so that every £1 of revenue costs for its collection five times as much as it costs at Belfast. I have now gone through the characteristics of some of the principal ports, and have shown that, no matter with what class of ports you compare Belfast, it has only a very small part of the Customs establishment to which it is entitled. We have a Return of 37 principal ports in the United Kingdom, showing the annual revenue collected at each of them, and from that Return I have obtained this extraordinary result. The cost of collection of revenue per cent is as follows:—at Barrow 24, Bristol 4·5, Cardiff 27, Dover 18, Folkestone 15, Grimsby 8, Liverpool 3, London 3, Newhaven 18, Newport 14, Rochester 7, Sunderland 9, Weymouth 20, Shields 6, Dundee 21, Glasgow a little over 2, Grangemouth 20, Leith 4¾, Dublin 1¾—the lowest on the list is 1 per cent, and Belfast stands at 0·9. If it could be contended that the Customs establishment was sufficient for the requirements of the Port of Belfast I would make no complaint; but when we have complaints from merchants in the town that foreign merchants are kept from trading with the port because of the deficient establishment, and that traders cannot get from the Government any consideration of their claims to establish bonded stores, then I say that there must be something wrong, and it is time that the whole matter should be looked into. I have never seen the collector of Customs at Belfast; I know nothing about him, although I believe him to be an efficient officer. Now, with regard to salary. At Glasgow and Bristol, with two-thirds of the yield of revenue of Belfast, and at Hull, with one fourteenth, the collectors have each £800 a-year. At Belfast the collector has £700, and the collector at Dublin the same. Why is that? It is because they are Irish ports. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury smiles; but I can discover no other distinction to account for the disparity. I ask that the collector of Customs at Belfast shall be placed on a level with the collectors at the other ports I have mentioned—Glasgow, Bristol, and Hull. Then with regard to the number of surveyors. At Glasgow there are five surveyors, and one of them is a surveyor of the first class; in Bristol, which contributes two-thirds of the revenue of Belfast, there are only two, and yet one of them is a surveyor of the first class; at Hull there are four surveyors, one of them being of the first class; Leith has three, one of whom is of the first class; but at Belfast, with its enormous return, there are four surveyors, and yet not one of the four is a surveyor of the first class. This, I say, is degrading the port in a manner which is not justifiable, and I ask that one of the surveyors in Belfast should be rated as a surveyor of the first class. If this were done, and if the hon. Gentleman will agree that the collector shall be placed in respect of salary on a level with the collectors at Glasgow, Bristol, and Hull, I would be ready to take it as an earnest that the Government will take the whole matter into consideration; and then, if they are unable to discover some justifiable reason or trace of it for placing Belfast in an inferior position to ports far below it in respect of revenue, I would ask that all the circumstances should be looked into, and that an extension of establishment at Belfast shall take place, and that proportionate to the great and progressive increase of the trade of the port.

SIR JAMES CORRY (Armagh, Mid): I may mention that the case of the steamer *City of Bristol*, with regard to Customs, was brought to my notice some time ago, and a Petition was presented to the Board of Customs, which I know is under consideration. I wish also to state that, although I have been connected with the trade of Belfast for 30 years, this is the first time I have heard that foreign merchants were prevented sending their goods there in consequence of the inadequate facilities being given by the Board of Customs. I again say, emphatically, that I have never heard such a complaint before. I am quite aware that we have for a long time been anxious that Belfast should be made a first-class port; but that has nothing to do with the number of surveyors, or with the establishment kept up there by the Board of Customs. I think it only right to say that I have never heard of the claims made by the hon. Member for West Belfast.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): The hon. Member for West Belfast (Mr. Sexton), in bringing forward this question, has spoken of the niggardly and cheeseparing policy of the Government.

MR. SEXTON: That is the question.

MR. JACKSON: I may say this is not a new charge; and I will go further, and add that if it is a true charge I am very glad of it. The hon. Gentleman has gone into statistics which I admit at once show that, having regard to revenue, and having regard also to the amount of business done, the Port of Belfast is worked with exceeding economy as compared with some other towns.

MR. SEXTON: All other towns.

MR. JACKSON: I will say all of them. If the hon. Gentleman had made the economical working of the Customs at Belfast a reason for attacking the extravagance which exists elsewhere, I could very well have understood his doing so, and should, to some extent, have supported him. But the hon. Gentleman has not shown—and the hon. Baronet the Member for Mid Armagh (Sir James Corry) has rather confirmed what I anticipated—that at Belfast there is no lack of staff to do the necessary work, and provide facilities for trade. The hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast has also referred to the question of bonded warehouses; and on this point I would say that it is clearly the duty of the Board of Customs to avoid the increased expenditure which would result from granting further bonding facilities if those already in existence are ample for the requirements of the past, and I presume that is the case in the present instance. The hon. Gentleman has quoted statistics of revenue and the cost of Customs establishments at various ports; but I am bound to say that the revenue of a port is not necessarily evidence of the staff necessary to be kept there for Customs purposes, or that it can be taken as a sound basis for estimating the services of the staff. The staff which may be necessary for the Customs Department at a particular port is regulated not by the amount of revenue collected, but by the amount of work which the staff is called on to perform, and that work is regulated and determined more by the number of foreign ships which enter the port than by any other circumstance whatever. Take the case of Kirkcaldy, and compare it with Belfast. Looking at Belfast in that light, according to the Return that the hon. Gentleman moved for in the year 1887—that is the year ending the 31st of March, 1887—there were 389 vessels entered under the heading of foreign trade of a tonnage of 251,402 in Belfast. But at Kirkcaldy there were 2,658 vessels with a tonnage of 784,000.

Mr. SEXTON: There is the coasting trade.

Mr. JACKSON: I am following my own argument, and I say that the staff required at a port is more determined by the number of foreign vessels than the amount of foreign trade. The House knows very well that it is more important, in the matter of the prevention of smuggling, to look after vessels that came from foreign ports than it is to look after vessels that merely do coasting trade. In Glasgow there are 2,128 vessels, with a total tonnage of 2,282,659 tons. Then Hull has been mentioned, and, following the same line, we may say there are there 5,218 vessels, with a total tonnage of 2,998,368. Therefore, the number of foreign vessels coming into Hull is about sixteen times as great as those entering Belfast. Then Bristol has been mentioned, and there the numbers are, 1,020 foreign vessels, with a tonnage of 744,837 tons. In Leith the number of foreign vessels is 2,365, with a tonnage of 1,227,623 tons. In Cork the number of foreign vessels is 226, and the tonnage 138,644; while in Dublin the figures are 490 foreign vessels, with a tonnage of 286,007 tons. I mention that as a proof of the necessity of keeping up a large staff in certain cases. The hon. Member has referred to Dublin, and has said that the collector in Dublin has the same salary as the collector at Belfast, and the staff is about the same.

Mr. SEXTON: No; relative to the revenue of Dublin.

Mr. JACKSON: I mean the cost is about the same. I am not speaking about the revenue; but I would point out that in Dublin there is what I may call a central office, and that the staff in Dublin discharges duties which cover over parts of Ireland, perhaps, besides Dublin. That, I believe, will account for any increase of cost in the staff as compared with Belfast. The hon. Member has referred to London. Well, it is hardly necessary to point out that London is the centre of the Customs Staff, and that, therefore, to compare the total cost and the percentage of cost in London to that of Belfast is not comparing like with like. I admit that Belfast is worked very economically, having regard to the revenue it produces. The revenue has continued to increase, and one knows perfectly well that in the case of a growing and thriving revenue one can get it more cheaply collected than in the case of a more or less declining revenue. The number of vessels on the foreign trade at Belfast, I am sorry to see, does not show a disposition to increase, because in 1885 the number was 495, in 1886 it was 431, and in 1887 it was 387. The hon. Member has stated that the merchants complain that the trade is impaired there by the restrictions which are put upon it. Well, Sir, I think the House will receive that statement with a certain amount of hesitation, because everybody who is connected with the business here, or who knows anything about the business, must know perfectly well that unless there were very gross misuse of the powers possessed by the Customs no restrictions which could be put upon business could at all interfere with the cargoes to Belfast as compared with Bristol, if Belfast were the best port to send them to. I, quite as much as the hon. Gentleman, would hail with satisfaction the development of the Port of Belfast; but surely the hon. Gentleman will not ask me unnecessarily to increase the cost of the Customs Department in that port. I can assure him that, as I have already said, I have called the attention of the Customs Authority to the matter. I am sure they will do what they can to give Belfast a proper staff, but I hope I shall not be pressed to make any declaration with regard to the increase of salaries.

MR. SEXTON: I should like to ask whether the hon. Gentleman would specially consider the question of placing the collectors and one of the surveyors on the same level with regard to salary as in similar ports in England.

MR. JACKSON: I would point out that the collector in England is in the same position as the collector in Dublin. I am afraid I cannot promise any increase in the salary of this officer. I have said that I will call the attention of the Customs Authorities to the matter. I am sure they are all most anxious to do all they can to give Belfast its proper position and status; but I hope the hon. Member will not ask me to give any positive pledge in the matter.

MR. EWART (Belfast, N.): This subject is one which has engaged the attention of the local bodies in Belfast for some years. There used to be at one time first, second, and third class ports, and at that time it was of advantage to Belfast that it was not of the first class. But that system of classification has been done away with, and at the present time I believe there is no ground for the allegation that the shipowners of Belfast suffer through not having a first-class collector and a first-class assistant. However, I do think that the case made out is a very strong one for the raising of the salary of the collector and his assistants. There is a very large amount of revenue collected in Belfast, and the principle is recognized that where a great deal of responsibility exists the pay should be in proportion to it. There is serious dissatisfaction felt by the collector in Belfast, and he is very often shifted. We no sooner get a really good man than he wishes to get a larger salary. I do hope that the Government will see their way to raising the salary of the collector and his assistant.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I rise to call attention to the grievance of a very humble body of public servants. I refer to a certain class of extra messengers in the Customs. I asked the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury about this business a little while ago, but I think the hon. Gentleman either did not altogether appreciate my question, or he himself was misinformed on the matter, because he said these men were paid 3*s*. a-day when employed. That is not the class of men to whom I desire to direct his attention. The class I refer to are not "glut men," so called. They are not paid 3*s*. a day, but 3*s*. 6*d*., and their employment is continuous. Their grievance is that on the public holidays, when perforce they are idle, they are not paid, and that actually on the Jubilee Day they were not paid. I am afraid they will have no very pleasant recollection of the Jubilee Day, and their sentiments on the matter can hardly be very loyal. All I ask for is that they should be paid their wages on these four Bank holidays, the Queen's birthday, Christmas Day, and Good Friday, that is, seven days altogether. The grounds on which the claim is based are briefly these. In the first place, as I have indicated, they are not "glut men," employed now and then, but they are servants of the State in constant employment. Secondly, they are men of very long service, some of them having served 29 years, and, having taken the trouble to strike an average, I find that their service averages no less than 17 years. In the third place, these men do precisely the same work as the established messengers of the Customs, who receive from £70 to £100 a-year, and have 16 days' leave in the year. Now, it occurred to me to ask these men when they put their case before me how it was that when a vacancy occurred in the class of established messengers, these extra men were not appointed to fill these vacancies. I am informed by these men that the reason is this. Appointments to the class of established messengers are in the gift of the Treasury. They are made, I am informed, on the nomination of Members of this House, and they constitute, in fact, one of the relics, I may call it, of the old system of patronage. Now, Sir, with regard to the men performing similar functions in other offices—take the case of the extra messengers at the Admiralty—the temporary messengers at the Admiralty have 21*s*. per week, the same as these men, but they have also a uniform allowed them, and they have 12 days' annual leave with pay, and 16 days' sick leave. Now, Sir, with regard to the cost which, satisfying the claim of these men, would entail upon the State. There are only 27 of them, and I believe the total cost would be £33 1*s.* 6*d.* I submit that no decent private employer would refuse to pay men for public holidays when those men had been 20 or 30 years in his service, and I think I shall have the sympathy of everyone when I say that the State ought not to be less liberal to its servants than private employers. Of course, the logical conclusion to the remarks which I have made would be to propose to add £33 1*s.* 6*d.* to the Vote, but I am precluded from adopting that course, and therefore what I propose to do is this, to move to reduce the Vote by £33. I beg to move that the Vote be reduced by that amount.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£651,848," and insert "£651.815."—(*Mr. Pickersgill.*)

Question proposed, "That '£651,848,' stand part of Resolution."

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I do not know that I shall be in Order in discussing the question of the tobacco manufacturers of Ireland under this Vote.

Mr. SPEAKER: No; a distinct Motion for reduction is now before the House.

Mr. CLANCY: Shall I be enabled to raise this question of the tobacco manufacturers afterwards?

Mr. SPEAKER: Certainly.

Mr. JACKSON: I would just say a word in answer to what the hon. Member said upon this question of extra messengers. I am very sorry if I misunderstood in any way the classification of the messengers to which the hon. Gentleman referred in his Question to me some time ago. All I can say is that it was equally misunderstood elsewhere, because the Question of the hon. Member, as printed on the Paper, was transmitted to the Customs Authorities, and it was on their authority that I made the statement that the men were what is known as "glut men." I was referring to a class of men which he had not referred to. I quite admit that, and I admit that the amount the hon. Gentleman referred to would be very small. The question was brought before the Treasury, and, rightly or wrongly, I am bound to say that my own personal view is very strongly that if allowances of this kind were made to the men in one of the Public Departments, you could not stop at that one Department, but would have to deal with every man who is in the service of the State. Now, that really opened up a prospect of so very large a description, that I hesitated to face it. It would have involved the expenditure of a very large sum, and would have rendered it necessary to have brought in a Supplementary Estimate. It appeared to me to be rather inconsistent that Parliament should be asked to vote a large sum of money for such a purpose. Everybody knows that a Vote was submitted to us for certain necessary alterations which were necessary to be made in the building in which this Assembly is being held, and even that was discussed at a certain length by several hon. Members, and I confess I felt satisfied that I could not consent to any expenditure of the kind proposed by the hon. Member seeing what our position in the matter was.

Mr. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): If I understood the hon. Gentleman rightly, he did not lay stress on the question of the Jubilee Day, but the complaint of these public servants is that they are, if I may use the expression, docked of an amount of their pay for other public holidays as well, and what I would respectfully suggest to the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury is whether it would not be possible to consider their position with a view to rectifying it in another year. I am very far from being anxious to urge on Her Majesty's Government any increase of expenditure, even of so small amount as this, especially when it would involve the consideration of other Departments as well, but I would base the application in this case strictly on the principle the hon. Gentleman has just laid down, that all public servants should be dealt with on the same terms, and equally. I would ask the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is the fact, or whether it is not, that the officials in the higher grades of the Public Service have a portion of their salaries deducted on account of their absence on public holidays, deductions which, I understand, are made from the wages of the class of men under discussion. If that is not the case, I only hope that the hon. Gentleman who has moved this reduction will, another Session, move a reduction, not of this particular amount, but move a much more considerable reduction in respect of those officials occupying higher positions who do not lose any of their pay in consequence of these public holidays.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Gentlemen press the Amendment?

MR. PICKERSGILL: Yes, I do, Sir.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 110; Noes 17: Majority 93.—(Div. List, No. 466.) [1.10 A.M.]

Resolution *agreed to.*

Nineteenth Resolution read a second time.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I shall not make any apology for drawing attention, even at this late hour of the night (1.15), and even at this late period of the Session, to the subject of the treatment of the Irish roll tobacco manufacturers. If I need not apologize, I may say, apart altogether from the importance of the subject, that this is the only occasion upon which we have had an opportunity of directing attention to the subject. Now, the facts of the case are ridiculously simple. In the Budget statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) on the 21st of April, he announced a reduction of 4*d.* per lb. in the duty on manufactured tobacco, and he fixed a month later, the 21st May, as the day on which the new duty was to come into operation. Now, in the case of the manufacture of English roll tobacco, the process of maturing takes only three or four days, so that the re-arrangement could not work any injury to those engaged in that manufacture, and no complaint was made by them. They could buy at the old rates almost up to the very day on which the new duty came into operation; and they need incur only a trifling loss, for they could turn out the tobacco, as I say, in three or four days from the date on which they cleared the raw material from the bond. But it was different with the cigar manufacturers of England, and also with the Irish and Scotch roll tobacco manufacturers. While the English manufacturers of roll tobacco could turn out their article in three or four days, the cigar manufacturers and the Irish and Scotch manufacturers of roll tobacco work according to a system under which the article in each case takes three or four weeks to mature. That is an essential point, and that is the great difference between the two cases. As a consequence of that, if the cigar manufacturers and the Irish and Scotch roll tobacco manufacturers were to continue working between the 21st of April and the 21st of May, and were to continue to pay all that time the old duty, they would be working at a dead loss, for the tobacco manufactured in that time would not be marketable until after the new duty came into operation. I think that is perfectly clear; indeed, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has admitted it in the case of the cigar manufacturers; but he did not admit it in the case of the cigar manufacturers immediately, for I find he was asked a Question on the subject on the 28th April, and then he said he could not understand why this should be the case—namely, why any loss should be incurred in the case even of cigar manufacturers. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that a pistol was presented at his breast by the manufacturers of cigars in England, and he was threatened with wholesale discharges of workmen if he persisted in his proposals as regarded them. Although the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer is a very brave man, as we all know, he yielded to this threat, and allowed a rebate of 4*d.* in the lb. to the cigar manufacturers on all cigars turned out by them during the month previous to the 21st of May. But if he found considerable difficulty in the case of the cigar manufacturers, he found still more difficulty in understanding how loss could be incurred in the case of the Irish and Scotch roll tobacco manufacturers. In the case of these latter, he could not be made to see the point at all. I have been striving to account for this inability to see what appears to me to be a perfectly clear case, and the only reason for it that I can imagine is that it was a dangerous thing in view of the coming elections to disappoint a number of English working men, or throw them out of employment; whereas in the case of the Irish and Scotch there was no such danger to apprehend, because Ireland and Scotland were already against the Government, and there was nothing to be gained by conciliating either the workmen of Ireland or Scotland. The consequence was that these working men got no advantage whatever, but were denied the advantage given to the cigar manufacturers, although the cases of the two classes of manufacturers were precisely the same. But the right hon. Gentleman said he would give the Irish and Scotch roll tobacco manufacturers a month's grace in which to allow them to reduce their stocks to the lowest possible limits. Well, now, from what has been already said, it will be seen that this concession was absolutely useless. If the Irish and Scotch roll tobacco manufacturers were situated as I have stated the English roll tobacco manufacturers are situated, and required only three or four days in which to mature their tobacco, the loss would be very slight; but the Irish and Scotch manufacturers require three or four weeks in which to mature their article, and consequently they would be obliged to buy every day up to the 21st of May the raw material at the old price, and it would be impossible for them to sell it until after the reduced duty came into operation. That is perfectly clear, and cannot be denied. I do not speak in this matter on behalf of Scotland; but the case of Scotland is on all-fours with that of Ireland. Consequently, the concession which was denied to Ireland was denied to Scotland, and I have no doubt the denial was equally felt by Scotland. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not deny there would be some loss, but he talked in a lofty way about the loss being very insignificant, and one which ought to be easily borne on that account by the manufacturers concerned. Now, if Ireland were like the rich constituency of St. George's, Hanover Square, the loss would not be very keenly felt. But Ireland is a very poor country, and an injury even of this trifling character is no small thing to Ireland. But the House would, perhaps, like to know the exact loss which Ireland was likely to incur. The Irish manufacturers estimated that the loss to them would be on their stocks £10,000 if they went on working, and if they ceased working they would be unable to supply the public, and consequently the whole supply of tobacco in Ireland would be disorganized. They estimated the output of Irish roll tobacco at 7,500 rolls per week, on which they reckoned they would lose 6*s.* 8*d.* per roll, which would amount to a total loss of £2,500 weekly. The number of hands who would be injured by this loss would be 800 hands employed in Dublin, 700 employed in Belfast, 200 employed in Cork, besides many more employed in other parts of Ireland. Although this loss may appear a small thing to the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald), who represents a University constituency, and who is laughing——

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I beg the hon. Member's pardon. I did not hear what the hon. Gentleman said. I was speaking to my hon. Friend near me of a totally different matter.

MR. CLANCY: I beg the right hon. and learned Gentleman's pardon. Although this may seem a small matter to Representatives of districts like St, George's, Hanover Square, I repeat that to a poor country like Ireland, where manufactures are declining day by day, where work is urgently needed, where, according to the contention of the Government itself, nothing is more wanted than employment for the population, this blow at an Irish industry, one of the few industries left, is a very serious matter indeed. Now, the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that he did not arrive at this determination until he had admitted a deputation, and had consulted with them, and until he had learned from them—the cigar manufacturers of England, to whom he made the concession to which I have referred—that their case was different from that of the Irish and Scotch roll tobacco manufacturers. But, Sir, it is a curious fact that on this deputation, which was so unanimous about the case of the manufacturers of cigars being different from that of the Irish and Scotch roll tobacco manufacturers, there was not a single Irishman who could present the case for Ireland. There was no Scotchman on the deputation either. No wonder the deputation was unanimous. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer also said that the roll tobacco manufacturers of Ireland could keep up the price of the article; and he referred—if I am informed rightly—to a circular which had been sent to him by one of the largest manufacturers in Ireland, in which it was stated that the price would not be reduced until about the 21st June, that is about a month after the reduced duty came into operation. On the basis of this circular from a firm of manufacturers in Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman ventured, on the anticipation that the price need not be lowered, and might be kept up for a considerable time after the 21st of May. The House may be glad to learn what the result has been. I have here an account of what the result has been supplied to me by one of the tobacco manufacturers in Cork. I am told that practically nearly all the factories remained idle until the 21st of May, the day upon which the reduced duty came into operation; and the result of that was, of course, that a large number of hands were unemployed, and that when the 21st of May arrived the stocks were very low, and that orders which came in about the 21st of May could not be supplied. Everything was thrown into confusion. The statement of my informant is—

> "We have not been able to supply a single order promptly. Orders have been delayed in some cases from seven to 10 days. From all directions telegrams have been pouring in complaining of the great inconvenience caused by the delay in executing orders."

Furthermore, I am informed that the disorganization of the tobacco trade is actually, to some extent, prevalent to the present moment. Instead of the roseate anticipations of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer being realized that is the result. I do not know whether it is any use—I suppose it is not—to ask for any redress on this subject. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has done his best to ruin the tobacco trade of Ireland; and we are entitled to assume, in face of the distinct warnings which were given to him as to the inevitable result of his policy, it would be very little use now to ask him to do anything to repair the loss and ravage he has caused. There is, however, another matter which I think it is still within his power to pay attention to; and possibly he may be willing in this respect to make some concession to the tobacco roll manufacturers of Ireland. I refer to the question of moisture. According to the new Moisture Clause, tobacco can legally contain no more than 35 per cent of moisture, including the natural moisture of the raw material. Well, now, every person well knows that in consequence of the heating process every roll of tobacco contains various amounts of moisture. A roll, which on the outside would contain only 30 per cent of moisture, might, if analyzed, be found to contain towards the centre 33 per cent of moisture, and if the analysis were made from the heart of the roll it might be found that the moisture amounted to 35 or 36 per cent. I think it is unreasonable, and not only so, but unjust that the roll tobacco manufacturers should be obliged to lose two or three or four per cent by reason of the necessity of having the heart of the roll containing no more than 35 per cent of moisture. What the manufacturers ask is that some one point should be taken from which a sample should be selected. I do not know whether I have made myself clear to the right hon. Gentleman. I submit to him that since he cannot, or since he is unwilling to do anything to repair the mischief he did by refusing the Irish roll tobacco manufacturers any such rebate as he allowed the cigar manufacturers, he might take this question of moisture into account and save the Irish roll tobacco manufacturers the loss of one, two, three, or four per cent, as the case may be. As I said in the commencement of my remarks, I make no apology for drawing attention to this matter, even at this hour of the night, or at this period of the Session. The manufacture of tobacco is one of the few manufactures which is in any way prosperous in Ireland. It will not be to the credit or the advantage of the Government if it is found that the legislation of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) tends to cripple this manufacture.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GOSCHEN) (St. George's, Hanover Square): One would have thought from the speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) that the Government had been proposing some heavy duties upon the manufacture of tobacco instead of taking the step of reducing those duties. Instead of endeavouring to ruin the tobacco industry of Ireland the Government took a step which I should have thought would have been considered to be to the interest of both the manufacturer and consumer—namely, a step in the direction of the reduction of the Tobacco Duty. I think everyone who has listened to the speech of the hon. Member must consider that there was great extravagance in his language when he argued that the manufacture of roll tobacco in Ireland had been injured in consequence of the reduction of duty. Now, I assure the hon. Gentleman—though I do not imagine my assurance will carry much weight with him—I regret extremely that the manufacturers of roll tobacco in Ireland, or that any of the industries in Ireland, should consider themselves damaged by the proposals I have had the honour to submit to Parliament. The Government and I have been most anxious to do perfect justice to Ireland in this matter. I should have thought there was evidence in the Budget of my anxiety to be perfectly just to Ireland. I wish to say no more in reply to the taunts of the hon. Gentleman to the effect that the Government have purposely neglected Irish interests in this matter. The hon. Gentleman called attention to the deputation which came to me, and alluded to a remark I made, that in consequence of the assurance I received from that deputation that there was a difference between cigar manufacture and roll tobacco manufacture, I had made a concession to the cigar manufacturers which I had refused to the roll tobacco manufacturers. That is not so; I never made a declaration to that effect. At that time there was a representation made to me by the manufacturers of cut tobacco. The representation made to me was that they stood in a different position to the cigar manufacturers.

Mr. CLANCY: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. I have here a report of his answer to the question, and from beginning to end there is not a single word about the manufacture of cut tobacco.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am speaking of the deputation. I received the deputation, and I remember the circumstances precisely. I do not know what document the hon. Member alludes to, but I am aware of what took place. The representations which were made to me were made in reply to questions I put, not to the cigar manufacturers, but to the manufacturers of manufactured tobacco. I asked whether their position was analogous to that of the cigar manufacturers, and they assured me that it was not. There was no question of roll tobacco, I say, uppermost at that time. With regard to the concession made to the cigar manufacturers as compared with the manufacturers of roll tobacco there is this difference—in the case of the cigar manufacturers, the moment they suspended their operations the market might have been flooded with foreign cigars paying a lower duty, and the manufacturers would have had no means whatever of recouping themselves. There is no analogous circumstance in the manufacture of roll tobacco in Ireland, which is a speciality in Ireland. Customers keep to that particular article, and there is very little competition, as is shown by the remark of the hon. Member that the manufacturers could not supply the demand when the time arrived. But in the case of the cigar manufacturers, if they had suspended operations from the 21st of April to the 21st of May, they would not have been able to recoup themselves, because they had to compete with the foreign cigars. They would have been obliged to discharge their workmen. There were, I think, 7,000 workmen engaged in that trade, and it would certainly have been a very serious matter if all these men had been discharged, and I repudiate as ridiculous the suggestion made by the hon. Gentleman that the concession was prompted by political considerations.

Mr. CLANCY: As a matter of fact, Irishmen were disemployed.

Mr. GOSCHEN: I have got the exact numbers of those discharged. When I heard of the discharges I made inquiries, and I find that in Belfast, for instance, which is one of the largest centres of the tobacco manufacture——

Mr. CLANCY: Was it from the same gentleman who informed you that the price need not be lowered until the reduced duty came into operation?

Mr. GOSCHEN: I am quite prepared that the hon. Gentleman should interrupt me when he has got anything reasonable to suggest. To whom does he think I should go for information except to the officers of the Inland Revenue who have got the tobacco duty in their charge? I had an official Return made to me of the number of discharges because I had been threatened with wholesale discharges. At Belfast the total number of men who were discharged was 11, and instead of 800 being discharged in Dublin, I think the number discharged temporarily was 350. It is a curious fact that the quantity of tobacco which was taken out during the month in which I was informed the trade would be stopped was very nearly as great as the quantity taken out in any of the previous months. Therefore, the alarm which took place with regard to the discharge of workmen was quite illusory. I will admit to the hon. Member and to the House that you cannot have any great change, you cannot reduce or increase duty without causing some inconvenience, and possibly some loss to some parties. No one regrets that more than myself, but in this case the number of workmen discharged was greatly exaggerated, and it is also a question whether manufacturers did not take advantage of the opportunity to discharge a certain number of their workmen, and lay the blame at the door of the Government. The hon. Gentleman has referred to a double loss. The House will agree with me that it is hardly fair to speak of a double loss, since, if the manufactories continued operations, the workmen would not lose by being discharged, and if the workmen were discharged the manufacturers would not lose by taking the raw material out of bond at the higher rate of duty. In 1878, when the duty was increased, the manufacturers had an opportunity of making a profit equal to the loss they allege they have now sustained. They had large stocks of tobacco on hand at that time, and when the duty was increased they immediately increased the price to the consumer, and gained a profit which was analogous to the loss they allege they have now sustained. In the particular case to which the hon. Gentleman refers, the demand for the article had not been diminished and the manufacturers had an opportunity of disposing, I trust, profitably of their stock. I certainly would be the last person to cause any loss to be sustained by any industry in Ireland, but if any loss has been sustained it was due to changes which under the circumstances were unavoidable. Having drawn my attention to this point, the hon. Gentleman is anxious that an average sample should be taken with regard to certain classes of tobacco, and that a certain amount of moisture should be allowed. But we have not alone to consider the interest of the manufacturer but the interest of the consumer in this matter, and accordingly we have decided that the purchaser of an ounce of tobacco is not to pay for more than 35 per cent of moisture. That, I think, is a large allowance. The percentage includes natural moisture, which no doubt the hon. Gentleman will understand may extend to a large quantity in many instances. I am informed that there would be great difficulty as regards taking an average, and may conclude my remarks by saying that it would be contrary to the policy we have pursued to allow more than a maximum of 35 per cent of moisture to be established by law.

MR. J. O'CONNOR (Tipperary, S.): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) said he would not be prepared to treat lightly any loss that might be incurred by any trade in Ireland; but I am inclined to think that the right hon. Gentleman has treated rather lightly the loss which has been incurred by this trade, when he alluded to the inconvenience which has been sustained. There was something more than inconvenience suffered; there was downright loss. Yet the right hon. Gentleman took care to relieve a certain branch of the trade in England, and the loss they would incur would be quite harmless as compared with that of the trade in Ireland. It is true, as he says, that he gave the latter a month's grace, but that was of no use whatever to men who had to buy on the old rate; because if they did not manufacture they lost their customers, and if they did they lost money. Those who are acquainted with the trade in Ireland will know that there is much competition on the part of the manufacturers on this side of the water, and if the Irish manufacturers had not kept up their stocks, the result would have been that they would have come into competition with manufacturers in this country who would have established themselves in their trade. I have myself seen the competition which is carried on to a serious extent by people in this country with the traders in Ireland; and I know very well, that owing to it there has been great disturbance in the Irish trade, the effect of which was that some of the Irish traders were obliged to continue manufacturing tobacco at a loss, as my hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin (Mr. Clancy) has pointed out, of 6*s.* 8*d.* per roll. Where they did not manufacture, their stocks ran down and they are suffering inconvenience which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not try to compensate in any way. He does not allow the manufacturers any rebate for the inconvenience they have suffered and are now suffering, nor does he allow them any compensation for the loss of 6*s.* 8*d.* per roll which they were obliged to manufacture. There were over here at the time when this alteration was made many persons connected with the trade in Ireland, and they endeavoured to impress on the Chancellor of the Exchequer the seriousness of the loss they incurred, and we complain that while the right hon. Gentleman took into account and considered the representations made to him by people on this side of the water, he treated lightly, to use his own words, the representations of Irish manufacturers. I think we have a right to complain of this one-sided treatment. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that a profit was made by the manufacturers when the duty was raised in 1878, but I point out that they were obliged to let their customers have a month's supply at the old rate, and as a matter of fact they really made no profit at all at the time referred to. I think my hon. Friend has done well in bringing this subject before the attention of the House, and in showing the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he cannot go on disturbing the trade in Ireland and giving an undue advantage to the trade in this country without his action being called in question.

Mr. CLANCY: I pointed out that the English traders only took three or four days to mature their tobacco, as against one month, which is necessary for that purpose in Ireland.

Mr. J. O'CONNOR: Exactly; my hon. Friend says that those who manufacture tobacco here mature it in three or four days, and that in Ireland a much longer time is required, and hence it is that the English traders have had an undue advantage in this matter. I repeat that my hon. Friend has done perfectly right in pointing out that the unfair treatment suffered by the manufacturers of tobacco in Ireland at the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Twentieth to Twenty-second Resolutions *agreed to.*

Twenty-third Resolution—

"That a sum, not exceeding £6,069, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, for repaying to the Civil Contingencies Fund certain Miscellaneous Advances"

—read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I asked the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) on a former occasion to lay upon the Table a copy of the Report of the Commission which inquired into the riots at Belfast, but the right hon. Gentleman stated that this document was confidential. I certainly cannot understand why the Report should not be produced. The ratepayers are surely entitled to know what evidence was taken at the inquiry, and what was the Report of the Commission. I have never heard before of a Report of the kind being withheld on the ground alleged, and I would ask the Government for some further explanation that we have not yet received as to why the result of an inquiry of this nature is not placed in the hands of hon. Members. This Vote also contains an item for medical attendance on officers injured in the Belfast riots. There were a large number of men of the police force attended to in hospitals, which are supported by voluntary contributions; and I think it is a great shame that hospitals which have spent hundreds of pounds in curing the men of the force should not be paid back. I should be greatly pleased to have some explanation on this subject, and for that purpose I move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Amendment proposed, to leave out "£6,069," and insert "£5,969."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That '£6,069' stand part of the Resolution."

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): I have made some inquiries as to the number of men treated in hospitals, and the Inspector General informs me that there was no extraordinary medical expenditure except £5 5*s.* for attendance on wounded constables under exceptional services; there was no expenditure incurred with regard to the Constabulary during the riots at Belfast, because they have a service of medical officers paid for by Government. There may be cases in which injured members of the force called in additional aid, but by the rules of the service that aid is not paid for out of the fund. There was the case of three policemen on full pay who paid the regulation hospital charges themselves. We have, therefore, no knowledge that the hospitals were involved in any extra expense; at the same time, I think that if the hospitals were put to any considerable expense, if their resources were straitened or crippled in any way, an account ought to be rendered and the expense repaid.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I am under the impression that the Inquiry at Belfast was conducted in a public manner; and that it was not private at all. The ratepayers and others were allowed to appear before the Commission; but the Reports of these bodies have always been regarded as a confidential document for the guidance of the Privy Council. That I believe was what my right hon. Friend intended to convey; but I will look into the matter, and if it is usual, or if there is a precedent for producing the Report I will endeavour to do so.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Resolution *agreed to.*

SUPERANNUATION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 354.]

(*Mr. Jackson, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): On moving the second reading of this Bill, I wish to say a few words in explanation of the reason for its introduction. Many Members of this House will know that for some years past the question of the exercise by the Treasury of what are called extra powers, has been brought before the attention of the Committee of Public Accounts, and by them before the House. There are from time to time cases arising which do not come within the limits of the Superannuation Act of 1859, and I venture to say that these are cases which undoubtedly claim consideration at the hands of the State. The Public Accounts Committee have from time to time reported to the House irregularities in connection with these cases—I say irregularities because it is of no use disguising the fact that there is irregularity in the exercise of a power which is not statutory, and although the Treasury has held hitherto that the sanction of Parliament obtained by the Appropriation Act every year exonerated them, still they have always felt that these transactions were more or less irregular. In 1882 the Public Accounts Committee stated that in the grant of the extra statutory pensions the Treasury had acted according to precedent; but that such action should only be resorted to in special cases, and that unless caution is observed there would be some danger lest the strict compliance with the provisions of the Superannuation Act which it is important to maintain would be interfered with. In 1883 and 1884 the Committee while acquiescing in the Treasury practice showed nevertheless that they were watching it with some jealousy, and they recorded their opinion that several cases of extra statutory allowances were reported by the Comptroller and Auditor General, and in the opinion of the Committee very properly so. They said that when the number of allowances was very large, some cases of irregularity would be unavoidable; but they should be as few as possible, and any case the exercise of this power by the Treasury required to be carefully guarded. In 1886 the Committee reported that the Comptroller and Auditor General had called the attention of the Public Accounts Committee to a number of cases in which pensions had been granted to the Treasury not in accordance with law; that the Treasury did not appear to admit the justice of the observations of the Comptroller and Auditor General, but considered that public convenience, or the urgency of some particular case, justified a departure from the strict letter of the law. Further, the Committee considered that it was Parliament and not the Treasury, which ought to decide whether the circumstances of any particular case are such as to require exceptional treatment, and that in straining the law for the purpose of meeting the exigencies of a particular case, the Treasury was usurping the functions of the Legislature. Again, in 1887, the Committee reported to the effect that last year they had commentated on the claim put forward by the Treasury to a discretionary power in dealing with superannuation and retired allowances, and reported that—

> "It is Parliament, and not the Treasury, which ought to decide whether the circumstances of any particular case are such as to require exceptional treatment, and it appears to your Committee that in straining the law for the purpose of meeting the exigencies of any particular case, the Treasury is usurping the functions of the Legislature."

The Committee reported that in a Minute dealing with the subject, the Treasury stated that their only desire was to administer the Superannuation Acts according to the strict letter of the law, with due regard to the interests of economy on the one hand, and the equitable claims of individuals on the other; and that a Bill had been prepared for the purpose of legalizing so much of the existing practice as is now extra-Statutory, and can be defined by Statute without danger to the public interests. It is in accordance with that pledge, and with the requirements of the Public Accounts Committee, that the Treasury have introduced this Bill. I venture to say that, if superannuation is justifiable at all, if the present Superannuation Acts are to remain in force, I think the very cases which are the most deserving will be excluded from the four corners of those Acts. The Treasury desires to get rid altogether of the discretionary power which is now exercised, so that in future with regard to every case they may be able to comply strictly with the law, and to do that they think it necessary to make some provision by which the very hard cases which come before them may be met.

Mr. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I rise to Order. Is it in Order to proceed with this Bill, which is blocked?

Mr. SPEAKER: This is a Money Bill, and the Notice of Amendment does not apply.

Mr. JACKSON: With regard to the clauses of the Bill, I am bound to say that I know of no objection which has been raised to any but Clauses 2 and 6. Clause 2 proposes to give power to the Treasury to grant a pension, in the event of retirement, to a Civil servant who may be not quite efficient and not 60 years of age, and who has a medical certificate, not exceeding in amount that for which his length of service would qualify him under the Superannuation Act of 1859. As I have said, some objection has been taken to this clause, and I am willing to admit that, as it stands in the Bill, it is open to misconception. I have had, however, the advantage of discussing the clause, not only with some civil servants who will be affected by it, but also with the hon. Member for the Brentford Division of Middlesex (Mr. Bigwood) and the hon. and learned Member for the Dulwich Division of Camberwell (Mr. Morgan Howard), who have taken a very great interest in the subject; and, in conjunction with them, I have framed an Amendment which I shall move in Committee, and which I believe meets the case entirely and removes any possible chance of injustice being done to existing civil servants. One portion of the Amendment provides that in case of any civil servant being reported by the Head of the Department as inefficient, the civil servant so reported shall have an opportunity of communicating with the Treasury, with whom the decision shall rest, and that the Treasury shall consider the representations so made. The other Proviso I propose to insert is that nothing in this Act shall interfere with the existing rights of any civil servant. I believe that these two alterations meet fairly the justice of the case, and I do not think there will be any difficulty with regard to the matter. With regard to Clause B, I think I may say the same of it as I have said with regard to Clause 2. It may be open to misconception. I have framed another clause that I propose to put down as an Amendment and substitute for this. I think I may say, having had the advantage of consulting with very able military members of the Commission who have taken a great interest in the matter, and to whom I have had an opportunity of showing the rules that it is proposed to lay on the Table of the House, carrying out the power given under this Bill, that Clause B, as it stands, really does not injuriously affect the position of any officer in any way whatever, but it gives power to the Treasury to frame rules which will affect their position. These rules, I think I am justified in saying, have been carefully considered by some of the able military Members of this House, and have been approved of by them as preserving the rights of officers as they exist at present, and making some further concession to them. As regards the financial effect of the Bill I need hardly say that in my position it is my duty to consider carefully what that will be, to know whether it would involve the State in any very large addition to the more effective Vote, because I am alive to the fact that many Members of the House think that the non-effective Vote at present is a very heavy one, and one which should be carefully watched. I believe that the effect of the measure will be a slight increase in the non-effective Vote, but that increase will arise under Clause 4, which will give power to the Treasury to make certain allowances and gratuities to workmen who at present are debarred, being outside the Superannuation Acts. I hope the hon. Members who feel strongly against extending the Superannuation Acts or against giving increased facilities for superannuation, will agree in this, that if there is one class more than another which ought not to be left out of the advantages of this system it is the workmen who are paid the lowest class of wages, and who are not on the Establishment at present. The Treasury has no power to meet these cases. Several hard cases have come before the Treasury, and they must necessarily do so in connection with so large an employment of civil servants as we have. There have been cases of an extremely hard and urgent character, and it is to meet these cases and to meet them legally that the Bill has been drawn. I hope the House will be good enough to accept with favour the Bill as drawn. I think it will not largely increase the amount of superannuation, but it will enable the Treasury to meet legally and properly a great many hard cases which it is at present impossible to deal with. I beg to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

GENERAL GOLDSWORTHY (Hammersmith): It was my intention to oppose this Bill, but since the Amendments which the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has agreed to introduce I will not oppose it. At the same time, I should like to say that I think the whole question of withholding part of the pay of officers who retire and accept appointments which are not provided for out of the Imperial funds requires consideration. I do not consider that the country is justified in compulsorily retiring officers from the service and giving them inadequate pensions, and then afterwards taking from them, when they have succeeded in obtaining Colonial or other employment, in order to supplement their small pensions, which were granted for past services. As no opportunity can be found on this occasion to introduce a new clause in the Bill, or to introduce an Amendment to the 1st clause which will meet this case, I shall, with the permission of the House, call attention to the subject next Session.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I may, perhaps, be permitted to express my extreme regret that a Bill of such great importance not only to all the services of the State, but to the public, should be brought forward at this hour, and at this period of the Session. I am sorry the right hon Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) did not respond to my appeal to defer the Bill until the beginning of next Session. He based his refusal upon the ground that certain Statutory allowances were being made, which it was necessary to ratify, and he made a point of the fact that these allowances had been going on, and that the Committee of Public Accounts had been calling attention to them for the last five years. As the Committee of Public Accounts has been calling attention to the matter for the last five years, I think we might surely have got on with the existing condition of things for a few months longer. It is impossible to discuss this Bill, which seems to me to have been very badly drawn with reference to all the circumstances of the case. The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury says that he has not heard any objection to the Bill except, I think, to the second and sixth sections. Well, with regard to the second section, I shall have something to say in a moment, but I want now to draw the hon. Gentleman's attention to the fourth section in which I think the drafters of the Bill have certainly left out of account considerations that ought to have been present to their minds. The Treasury has been in the habit of granting compassionate gratuities on retirement which are not permitted by the law, and, roughly speaking, these gratuities have been given to two classes of persons, to workmen and also to what I may call professional men of whom draftsmen are perhaps the most representative class. And, Sir, the allowance granted to Class 2, professional men, has, of course, been upon a higher scale than that granted to Class 1—the workmen. Class 2, that is professional men, seems to have been left out of account by the drafters of the Bill. These draftsmen in some cases receive salaries of a maximum of £260 per annum, and by the Treasury Minute of February 1880, they are to receive one year's salary at the age of 60. Now, my point is that by the Treasury Minutes these draftsmen would be entitled to receive £100 more than they are entitled to get under this Bill. And as we are told that the object of this Bill is to prevent any allowances being made which are contrary to law, and of course contrary to this Satute, it seems to me that these draftsmen would not receive what they have been led to expect under the Treasury Minute of February 1880—that, in fact, they would receive under the Bill no less than £100 less than they have been entitled to expect under the Treasury Minute. This Statute I am afraid would override the Treasury Minute of 1880. Then take another case—the case of the writers. There is another Minute affecting them—the Minute of December 1886. According to this Minute the writers are to receive a month's pay for each year of service, but this Bill would only give them two pays for each year. Now, I submit, as a matter of law, that the Statute would override each of these Minutes, and therefore the draftsmen on the one hand and the writers on the other would not receive what they are entitled to under those Minutes. I would just say one word with regards to Clause 2. The object of the clause is to enable the Department to get rid of a civil servant who is assumed to be inefficient. But, Sir, what is the test of inefficiency? It appears from the Memorandum to this Bill that the test of inefficiency is not to be the incapacity of these men to discharge their accustomed duties; but it is said that these persons are found inefficient to superintend or to carry out reforms, opportunities for effecting which arise in our Public Departments from time to time. So that the test of inefficiency is not to be proved inefficiency in the past work of those gentlemen, but speculative inefficiency with regard to their future work. The hon. Gentleman submits to us that sufficient safeguards have been introduced into the Bill by the Amendments of which he has just given notice. Well, Sir, of course these Amendments are sprung upon us, and it is difficult at a moment's notice to precisely gauge their real value and efficiency. The impression, in my mind, is that they do not, by any means, safeguard the rights of existing civil servants as fully as the hon. Gentleman would have us believe. He says that a Proviso is to be introduced saving the rights of existing civil servants. But, Sir, the rights of the existing civil servants it would perhaps be very difficult strictly to define, and I observe that by the 9th Clause of this Bill the Treasury is to be the final authority upon any question arising under the Bill. So that after all saving the rights of civil servants does not carry us very far, because the Treasury is to be the only authority for determining what the rights of civil servants are. While I do not intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill, I shall certainly reserve my right very closely to scrutinize and carefully to consider between now and the Committee stage the Amendments of which the hon. Member has given Notice.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[BILL 358.]

(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, Sir Herbert Maxwell.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 5th September.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 6 (Duties and powers of school board with respect to technical schools).

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): In the absence of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dundee (Mr. E. Robertson) I beg to move the Amendment which stands in his name. The question which is raised in that Amendment is a very important question of principle. The other night the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) observed that there was only one Scotch Member opposed to this Bill. Well, he was very nearly, but not quite correct. If he had said that not one Scotch Member was opposed to the Bill he would have been perfectly correct. I objected, however, and several Scotch Members objected to this Bill being brought on at so very late an hour that it was scarcely possible to get fair consideration for the question which was raised by it—the very important question of principle. Now, Sir, the clause, as it stands, is an enabling clause, and it is part of an enabling or permissive Bill. The principle of the Bill is simply this. It is to take away the prohibition which at the present moment excites much displeasure amongst the Scotch school boards—a prohibition which prevents them from using any of the money of the ratepayers for the purpose of providing buildings for technical education. The object of this Bill is to enable the school board, which is the only authority in Scotland concerned with education, to add technical instruction to the other subjects which it is within their power to teach. This clause provides that the school board may use for the purposes of a technical school any building, or part of any building, now vested with the school board for the purposes of the Education (Scotland) Acts of 1872 and 1883, but it adds this important Proviso—"with the consent of the Scotch Education Department." Now, Sir, that is the clause to which we object, and to which I, for my part, will offer very strong resistance. I object to it for this reason. If the Scotch Education Department were to give us any money for the purpose of technical instruction, then I admit that the Scotch Education Department would have a right to a voice in the way in which that money was to be spent. But the Scotch Education Department under this Bill does not contribute one single penny in aid of the rates for the purpose of technical instruction, and therefore to give to the Scotch Education Department the power to interfere with the school boards in the management of that which is exclusively their own, and in respect of instruction which does not impose any burden on the Exchequer, is, I venture to say, to introduce a principle totally at variance with the whole course of legislation, and one which is very inconvenient and objectionable. Let us consider what the operation of this clause will be. The school board investigating the facts in a particular locality is of opinion that some particular school or part of a school should be used for the purpose of technical instruction. In my opinion the school board is the best judge of that question and the only proper judge, but under this Bill before they can act they must first of all present a Memorial to the Education Department, and the Memorial must be considered by someone, and that Department gives its consent. Assuming that that might be an intelligent consent, and a consent founded on inquiry and involving inquiry, what you are doing is that you are creating a new Department in London to do work that is wholly useless and unnecessary—which is worse than useless and unnecessary—which is entirely mischievous. How is the Secretary of a Scotch Department to form an opinion as to whether a particular school ought or ought not to be used for technical instruction? He has no knowledge of the circumstances of the locality. If he institutes an inquiry who is going to inquire? He cannot possibly employ anybody who is better acquainted with the locality than the school board. The opinion of a Secretary in London never can be founded on the information that is accessible to the school board, therefore the inference is that the opinion of the Department must necessarily be less valuable than the decision of the school board itself. Again, Sir, I am one of those who hold very strongly the opinion that the powers of Local Authorities should as far as possible be left unfettered by a central bureaucracy either in London or in Edinburgh. Where the Central Authority has the disposition of public funds I should recognize their right to interfere, but where no such funds are forthcoming, to create a new Department to interfere with the Scotch school boards is objectionable in itself. It is also objectionable from the point of view of the taxpayer. We often hear of economy in this House, but how can you have economy if you persist in making useless work? If you make useless work you have to appoint persons to do it, and you thereby establish a serious expense which will continually increase; and under this clause, and under another clause to which I will call attention presently, you are creating very expensive administrative machinery in London which can be of no use, which is founded on no principle, and which must be necessarily an unjustifiable burden on the general taxpayer. Now, Sir, it may be said that at the present moment with regard to elementary education in Scotland the Scotch Department has a right to interfere. Of course it has, because the Scotch Department is the means by which the funds for carrying on the educational work of that country is dealt out to the people of Scotland. If the Scotch Education Department were to give us money for technical instruction. I should not object, but I do object now for the reason that there is a Department of the State which will assist the school boards in technical instruction, and that is the Department of Science and Art. The school boards have certain grants from the Department of Science and Art, and must follow the conditions laid down by that body. To introduce a third wheel, to introduce wholly unnecessary machinery, is a piece of policy which I am curious to know how the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate (Mr. J. H. A. Macdonald) can defend. It seems to me that this is a clause on which the right hon. and learned Gentleman has been misled by the influence of the Heads of Departments. We know that there is a constant tendency in Government Offices to act on the maxim which used to be professed by the Judges, that the business of a good Judge is to enlarge his jurisdiction. It would seem as though it were the desire now of a good Secretary to enlarge his powers. I trust the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate will agree to omit these words, the omission of which I now move.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, lines 27 and 28, to leave out the words "with the consent of the Scotch Education Department."—(*Mr. E. Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I am certainly very much astonished at the ground taken by the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter). He declares that the Scotch Education Department has nothing to do with this matter. Does he not realize that this clause is a clause by which a school is to be erected for the purpose of elementary education originally and then to be turned into a technical school? Is it not important when it is proposed to use the existing buildings of State-aided schools for technical instruction—is it not important to see that these elementary schools are not so used as to interfere with their primary and proper purpose—namely, their being used for elementary education? And what is a more fit authority to see to that than the Education Department? As to what the hon. Gentleman has said with regard to the Scotch Education Department not providing any money for the obtaining of these schools, the Scotch Education Department, of course, has control of the grants which go to keep the schools as State-aided schools. I should be very much astonished if the Scotch Members were to agree with the hon. Gentleman in what he suggests; but certainly, so far as the Government are concerned, they must oppose it.

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars, &c.): I rise, Sir, to support the

Amendment. The Scotch Education Department is not made up of a body of men who can obtain the confidence of the people of Scotland. It is common knowledge that we have our own educational methods and our own ideas of the manner in which our people ought to be educated. In the opinion of some persons it may be that these are mere prejudices. Be that as it may, these opinions are held very strongly in Scotland. The Scotch Education Department is made up of five principal Members. Three of these five are the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Home Secretary, and the Lord President of the Council. Now, what can these persons know about education in Scotland? If they were to interfere in any way whatever it would be merely to the prejudice of education in that country; if they do not interfere then they are mere surplusage. If the Board were made up of those who represented the interests of the Scotch people, I should have no objection to the clause as it stands; but I am certain the people of Scotland would have no confidence in a Department constituted of the men I have just named, with only two others who may be supposed to know something about Scotch education—namely, the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Advocate. May I ask the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate if there is any intention to reform the *personnel* of the Board, because it certainly stands much in need of it. There is not a member of the Board who is getatable by the people of Scotland, or who is in touch with the people of Scotland. If the Board were made up, say, of the Lord Advocate, the Scottish Secretary, and four or five Scottish Members of Parliament nominated by the Government, that Board would, to some extent, possess the confidence of the people of Scotland. The Scotch people would be able to approach the Board, or some members of it, and the majority of the people would be in touch with it, and the Board would know what their wants were, and would try to satisfy those wants. But, at the present time the only person who is approachable on the Board is a permanent official, and we know what permanent officials are. They will simply meet reforming proposals of every kind by advancing as many difficulties as they can. It is not to the advantage of permanent officials to make reforms or alterations, beneficial or otherwise. It is to their interest to leave matters as much as possible where they are. It is for that reason, and because the *personnel* of the Board is not such as will carry with it the confidence of the people of Scotland, that I support the Amendment of the hon. Member for North Aberdeen.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I oppose the Amendment, and I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate has answered very satisfactorily the objections which have been raised to the clause. Power must centre somewhere. Why should not the Scotch Education Department have as full control over technical education as over any other branch of education? I cannot see, for my part, why there should be any alteration in the central power. I should have preferred to see the Education Board in Edinburgh, but as that cannot be, I fail to see any real cause for the objections raised, considering that hitherto the work has been done exceedingly well. My hon. Friend the Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow (Mr. Provand) has complained of the constitution of the Board. If he can prove it is not satisfactory to the Scotch people let him move an alteration. I have heard no such complaints as the hon. Gentleman refers to, and I do not think the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer or the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary interfere in the slightest degree with education in Scotland. I believe the officials are doing their work admirably, and therefore I do not think there is the slightest necessity for this Amendment. I shall give my support to the Government.

MR. HUNTER: The right hon. and learned Lord Advocate said he would be surprised if any considerable number of Scotch Members were of my opinion. With the exception of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lanark (Mr. Mason) who had just spoken, I do not think he will find any who are not of my opinion. It is very unfortunate that this Bill should be brought on at a period of the Session when Scotch Members—owing to other engagements—have left town. I assure the right hon.

and learned Gentleman that had all the Scotch Members been present he would have found himself in a very small minority indeed. My hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lanark does not see why the Scotch Education Department should not have the same control over technical education as our elementary education. I think I had explained to the Committee that the Scotch Education Department pays for elementary education, and that they are not going to pay for technical education, and that that makes all the difference in the world. With regard to the argument of the Lord Advocate, I must confess I never heard a thinner, or a lower argument advanced. The Scotch Education Department is going to strangle the young Hercules of technical education in Scotland, and for what reason? Simply and solely because there are some portions of some schools which may have been built out of money contributed by Parliament. How can it be supposed that the school boards are going to substitute technical education for elementary education? The contrary is the result. The idea that the school boards of Scotland are going to rush to the destruction of elementary schools for the purpose of introducing technical schools is as wild an idea as I ever heard expressed. I have received no satisfaction on this point, and as far as I am concerned the Scotch Education Department shall never have the same power over technical instruction that they have over elementary instruction. Technical education is a matter in which local spontaniety is of great importance, and, in my opinion, there can be nothing worse for technical education than that it should be put into the hands of one man, who has his own particular fads. Every school board acts according to its own mind. It pays for its own work. The ratepayers have to find the money, and I should like to know whether they are not to have a voice in its disbursement?

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I quite agree with what my hon. Friend has said with regard to the Scotch Education Department, and in the necessity for a reform of that Department, and I do hope that the Government will see their way at some future time to undertake a reform of the Department. But with regard to this particular clause my hon. Friends are under a perfect miscomprehension. There is no necessity for leaving out the consent of the Scotch Education Department. These schools are not only under the control of the school board, but the Scotch Education Department. It is the duty of the Department to see that the schools are not applied to any purposes detrimental to elementary education.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 29, leave out "now."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 30, after "1883," insert the words "and a school board or combination of school board may, with the consent of the Scotch Education Department, use for the purposes of the Education (Scotland) Acts, 1872 to 1883, any buildings, or part of any buildings, authorised by this Act."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. HUNTER: I beg to propose the Amendment which stands in the name of my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dundee (Mr. E. Robertson)—namely, to leave out the words "with the consent of the Scotch Education Department," in lines 31 and 32. This is the same point as I raised before, only in this instance the necessity of the Amendment is greater. The school board is not to be allowed to go to the Public Works Loan Commissioners without the consent of the Scotch Education Department. Now that is emphatically an unnecessary provision.

Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD: It is for the purpose of enabling the school board to spread the payment of the expense of providing a technical school over a number of years.

Mr. HUNTER: Then why go to the Scotch Education Department? This Amendment, as I say, raises the same point as my last Amendment, only the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate has not got the technical plea that the Government have contributed any money in the matter.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, lines 31 and 32, leave out "with the consent of the Scotch Education Department."—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

Question, "That the words 'with the consent of the Scotch Education Department' stand part of the Clause," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 33, after "years," insert "not exceeding 35 years, unless with the sanction of the Treasury, and in any case."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. CALDWELL: I think it would be more advantageous if the maximum period were limited to 35 years. The clause allows 50 years in exceptional cases. I hope that if the Scotch Members are found to be unanimous in a matter of this kind, the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate will limit the number of years to 35.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I will consider the question before Report.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Combination of school boards to provide technical school).

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 11, after the word "school," to insert the words "and the sum necessary to meet any deficiency on the technical school accounts."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 13, to leave out the word "thereof," and insert the words "of said resolution."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That the word 'thereof' stand part of the Clause," put, and *negatived.*

Question, "That the words 'of said resolution' be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 8 *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Scholars admissible to technical schools).

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 21, to leave out from "from" to "Act," in line 25, inclusive, and insert "under section seventy-three of 'The Education (Scotland) Act, 1872,' as amended by section seven of 'The Education (Scotland) Act, 1883.'"—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Clause, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate might well dispense with this clause. It is one which might operate inconveniently, and it is really unnecessary. No person goes to a school, and pays fees to go to that school, unless he has reason to think he is going to get some benefit from it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Technical schools deemed public. Effect of attendance).

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 29, after the word "Parliament," to insert the words "under the Education (Scotland) Acts, 1872 to 1883."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 11 (Definitions).

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 32, prefix the following words:—"The expression 'technical school' means a school or department of a school in which technical instruction is given, and 'school board' shall include combination of school boards."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name. The reason why I move this Amendment is simply that, without interfering with the discretion of the Science and Art Department, I wish to give power to the school boards to teach any of the subjects that are enumerated in this list at their own expense, if they choose to do so. If the school boards choose to teach these subjects, there is no reason why they should not do so without interference from the Scotch Education Department. The Glasgow School Board has passed a resolution, which I dare say has reached the hands of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, in which they lay great stress on the point. I do not wish to give the school boards too wide a discretion, and I think my Amendment gives sufficient guarantee against any extravagance in the public business.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 32, leave out from "means," to "any," in line 34, and insert "the following subjects: agriculture, drawing, modelling, working in leather, clay, glass, wood, and metal, weaving, dyeing, designing, printing, bleaching, building, machine construction, naval architecture, navigation, civil and mechanical engineering, mathematics, mechanics, natural philosophy, chemistry, metallurgy, textile fabrics, geology, botany, French, German, and."—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. MACDONALD) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I am very much afraid the effect of the Amendment will be the very opposite of what my hon. Friend intends. Let me, in passing, notice that there are certainly subjects mentioned in the Amendment which, under no aspect, can be called technical subjects. For instance, I doubt very much whether French and German can be called technical subjects. Now, does this Amendment not do just the very thing it is desired to avoid? Here are a number of subjects, and the effect of specifying them will be that if any new subjects arise—and subjects arise every day—it will not be competent to teach them. The whole scope and intention of the Act is to give the greatest possible freedom; and I must protest against the suggestion that it is the object and intention of the Scotch Education Department to interfere with or cripple the school boards in carrying out reasonable technical instruction in their schools.

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): There is another element which my hon. Friend the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) has lost sight of, and that is the existence at present of technical schools. There are technical schools existing now in Glasgow, and it would never do to allow the School Board to establish schools which would interfere with the present technical schools without having the consent of the Scotch Education Department. We say that for the efficiency of technical schools you should not allow schools to come into collision and competition with each other without having the check of the Scotch Education Department.

MR. HUNTER: I am afraid the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate has not followed the Amendment. It enumerates a certain number of subjects which he complains of as being too wide, and then the words of the clause come in "in every subject which may for the time being be sanctioned by that Department"— namely, the Science and Art Department. The Science and Art Department is wholly unlimited. There is nothing which may not be introduced under these words; therefore the enumeration of these specific subjects is in addition to the powers of the Department, and not a limitation or a qualification of its powers. This is a matter upon which the School Board of Glasgow, which is the largest school board in Scotland, and I suppose, in some respects, the most important, have laid great stress. They are extremely desirous they should not be limited to the particular number of subjects which may, from time to time, be suggested by the Science and Art Department.

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I have to propose that the subjects shall be approved by the Scotch Education Department.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): Did I understand the right hon. and learned Gentleman to say that modern languages are not to be regarded as technical subjects?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: I said that French and German are not technical subjects.

MR. WOODALL: But surely they are essential features in commercial instruction, which, it is admitted, ought to be encouraged in any technical scheme.

MR. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I suggest to my hon. Friend the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) that he should withdraw his Amendment, because I really believe its effect would be to limit the instruction, which I know is not the object which he has in view.

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE) (Kent, Dartford): I think the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Aberdeen (Mr. Hunter) is under a misapprehension as to the Definition Clause. A vast number of these subjects are subjects for which grants are given by the Science and Art Department. What my right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate desires is to leave the subjects as open as possible. They are now left open in the Bill.

MR. HUNTER: I think that the very argument of the right hon. and learned Lord Advocate furnishes a strong reason why we should insert words of this kind. He says that French and German are not to be included in the subjects for which grants are to be given, because they are not technical subjects. There can be no possible harm in enlarging the clause by inserting particular subjects.

MR. WOODALL: Do the Science and Art Department undertake to give grants for any subject approved by the Scotch Education Department?

MR. J. H. A. MACDONALD: Not at all.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 32, after the words "means instruction," insert the words "in subjects approved by the Scotch Educational Department, or"—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, lines 36 and 37, to leave out all the words from "Department" to the end of the Clause.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question, "That those words be there left out," put, and *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 3, to leave out lines 40 and 41.—(*Mr. Hunter.*)

Question, "That those lines be there left out," put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

New Clause—

(School for subjects other than those for which grant is claimed to be conducted under Scotch Code.)

"Every school provided under this Act shall, in respect to all subjects other than those for which a grant is claimed from the Science and Art Department, be conducted in accordance with the conditions which may from time to time be set forth in the Scotch Education Code annually laid before Parliament under the heading 'Technical Schools,'"

—(*The Lord Advocate,*)—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."

MR. HUNTER (Aberdeen, N.): This clause is one which carries the objectionable principle I have already alluded to further than any clause of the Bill. It is a clause which provides that, where a school board receives any money for the purpose of the Bill, the school board can only act under the control of the Scotch Education Department. It is carrying out, in the most naked form, the principle which, I say, underlies several clauses of the Bill. This is an express statutory declaration that in a case where a Government Department gives any money to a Local Body, that authority shall not have power to lay down any conditions without the consent of the Central Authority; and I must, therefore, object to the second reading of the clause.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 104; Noes 16: Majority 88. [3.20 A.M.]

AYES.

Addison, J. E. W.
Agg-Gardner, J. T.
Aird, J.
Ambrose, W.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Baden-Powell, G. S.
Balfour, rt. hon. A. J.
Barry, A. H. Smith-
Bentinck, W. G. C.
Beresford, Lord C. W. De la Poer
Bethell, Commander G. R.
Bigwood, J.
Blundell, Colonel H. B. H..
Bond, G. H.
Bonsor, H. C. O.
Borthwick, Sir A.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brookfield, A. M.
Bruce, Lord H.
Burghley, Lord
Caldwell, J.
Carmarthen, Marq. of
Charrington, S.
Clarke, Sir E. G.
Colomb, Capt. J. C. R.
Cooke, C. W. R.
Corry, Sir J. P.
Cotton, Capt. E. T. D.
Davenport, H. T.
De Lisle, E. J. L. M. P.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dimsdale, Baron R.
Dyke, right hon. Sir W. H.
Egerton, hon. A. de T.
Elton, C. I.
Evelyn, W. J.
Eyre, Colonel H.
Fergusson, right hon. Sir J.
Finch, G. H.
Fisher, W. H.
Fitzgerald, R. U. P.
Fitz-Wygram, Gen. Sir F. W.
Fletcher, Sir H.
Folkestone, right hon. Viscount
Forwood, A. B.
Fraser, General C. C.
Gedge, S.
Gent-Davis, R.
Gibson, J. G.
Gilliat, J. S.
Godson, A. F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General W. T.
Goschen, rt. hn. G. J.
Grimston, Viscount
Hall, C.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G. F.
Heathcote, Capt. J. H. Edwards-
Herbert, hon. S.
Hill, right hon. Lord A. W.
Hill, Colonel E. S.
Hoare, S.
Holland, rt. hon. Sir H. T.
Hornby, W. H.
Hunt, F. S.
Isaacs, L. H.
Jackson, W. L.
Jeffreys, A. F.
Kelly, J. R.
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.
Kimber, H.
King-Harman, right hon. Colonel E. R.
Knowles, L.
Lafone, A.
Lawrence, W. F.
Lewisham, right hon. Viscount
Long, W. H.
Macartney, W. G. E.

acdonald, right hon. J. H. A.
Maclure, J. W.
Mason, S.
Matthews, rt. hon. H.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Milvain, T.
Mount, W. G.
Murdoch, C. T.
Northcote, hon. H. S.
Parker, hon. F.
Pelly, Sir L.
Plunket, right hon. D. R.
Powell, F. S.
Puleston, Sir J. H.
Reed, H. B.
Ritchie, rt. hon. C. T.
Robertson, J. P. B.
Round, J.
Smith, right hon. W. H.
Stanhope, rt. hon. E.
Stephens, H. C.
Talbot, J. G.
Temple, Sir R.
Tollemache, H. J.
Webster, Sir R. E.
Weymouth, Viscount
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Walrond, Col. W. H.

NOES.

Biggar, J. G.
Carew, J. L.
Clancy, J. J.
Conway, M.
Conybeare, C. A. V.
Cossham, H.
Dillwyn, L. L.
M'Arthur, W. A.
Nolan, J.
O'Brien, P.
O'Connor, J. (Tippry.)
Pickersgill, E. H.
Pyne, J. D.
Rowlands, J.
Sexton, T.
Stewart, H.

TELLERS.
Hunter, W. A.
Provand, A. D.

Mr. MASON (Lanark, Mid): I rise to move the second reading of a new clause which I have placed upon the Paper. The object I have in view is to give power to school boards to assist other schools in providing technical education. As an instance, I will take the City of Glasgow. You have there 50 trades, perhaps in all of which instruction is required, and it will be almost impossible for the school board to erect schools to provide for all this technical education. It will be very expensive work indeed to do all that will be required, and such as none of our cities, situated as Glasgow is, would face. There would be considerable difficulty in meeting all the demands on the school boards for technical education. But there are already a number of schools which stand greatly in need of assistance from the school board; and by the clause I have put down the school board would be able to give that assistance which without it they would have no power to grant. Of course, the school board would impose their own conditions as to the way in which they would assist the other schools. The object I have in view is, as much as possible, to save the money of the ratepayers, and also to stimulate the various trades to set up schoolrooms in the expectation that the school board would give them assistance. There are many towns in Scotland where there are three, six, or more trades being carried on, and in which it would be very difficult to set up schools for the purpose of the technical instruction required, without the assistance I propose should be given by the school board; and I have a confident feeling that a stimulus would be given in the right direction if my clause were added to the Bill. I trust, therefore, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate will agree to the second reading of the clause.

New Clause—

(Power to school board to assist technical school.)

"Subject to the conditions under which a school board may provide and maintain a technical school (so far as such conditions are applicable) a school board may (with the consent of the Scotch Education Department and in terms thereof) assist other schools providing technical instruction,"—(*Mr. Mason*,)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. H. A. **Macdonald**) (Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities): I do not quite like the clause in its present form; there is one portion of it which it would be necessary to alter, and that is at the end of the clause. I suggest that words should be struck out of the last line for the purpose of inserting "on such terms and conditions as may be prescribed provide technical instruction." If the hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lanark will admit such words, I shall certainly be inclined to support his Amendment.

Mr. MASON: I shall be very glad to accept them.

Mr. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I feel compelled to give this clause my most strenuous opposition, and I ask the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House (Mr. W. H. Smith) to consider the very important principle involved in my hon. Friend's proposal. According to the Education (Scotland) Act, 1872, school boards were authorized to provide board schools for elementary instruction; but there was no provision in that Act authorizing school boards to contribute money to schools not under their management. There is no such principle in operation in Scotland as that the ratepayers' money should be collected for the purpose of providing schools to be maintained in any other way than under the control of the school board itself. It is an entirely novel principle which my hon. Friend seeks to introduce, when he asks for the subsidizing of schools that are not entirely under the control of the school board. Supposing that you hold that school boards are to be entitled to subsidize technical schools which are purely of a voluntary nature, then you raise this important question—that they also will claim that they ought to have a grant out of the local rates for the purpose of starting other schools which may be quite as necessary as any technical schools can be; and I am surprised that the Government, at this period of the Session, should entertain a proposal which will meet, undoubtedly, with strong opposition.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I venture to appeal to the hon. Member for Mid Lanark (Mr. Mason) not to press his clause this evening, but to give the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate an opportunity of considering it between the present time and the Report. If the clause is pressed now, I shall feel it my duty to oppose it.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. CALDWELL (Glasgow, St. Rollox): There is another point which I hope the right hon. and learned Gentleman will adjust before Report. According to the Education Act, all accounts must be laid before Parliament. It is necessary that the accounts of the schools should be taken and presented in the same way, and I suggest that the right hon. and learned Gentleman should provide for this on the Report.

Schedule.

Amendment proposed, in page 4, to leave out the Schedule.—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

MUNICIPAL REGULATION (CONSTABULARY, &c.) (BELFAST) (*re-committed*) BILL.—[BILL 291.]

(*Colonel King-Harman, Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.*)

COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Order be discharged."

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): Sir, I feel it my duty to protest against the discharge of this Order.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Order *discharged.*

Bill *withdrawn.*

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE, 1885-6.

ACCOUNTS *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) *Resolved,* That it appears by the Navy Appropriation Account for the year ended the 31st day of March 1886, and the statement appended thereto, as follows, viz.:—

(a.) That the gross expenditure for certain Navy Services exceeded the estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £3,644,763 8*s.* 2*d.*, as shown in Column No. 1 of the Schedule hereto appended; while the gross expenditure for other Navy Services fell short of the estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £43,404 8*s.* 5*d.*, as shown in Column No. 2 of the said appended Schedule, so that the gross actual expenditure for the whole of the Navy Services exceeded the gross estimated expenditure by the net sum of £3,601,358 19*s.* 9*d.*;

(b.) That the receipts in aid of certain Navy Services fell short of the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £3,664 16*s.* 3*d.*, as shown in Column No. 3 of the said appended Schedule; while the receipts in aid of other Navy Services exceeded the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £106,222 7*s.* 8*d.*, as shown in Column No. 4 of the said appended Schedule; so that the total actual receipts in aid of the Grants for Navy Services exceeded the total estimated receipts by the net sum of £102,557 11*s.* 5*d.*;

(c.) That the resulting differences between the Exchequer Grants for Navy Services and the net expenditure are as follows, viz.:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Total Surpluses ...	43,558	16	3
Total Deficits......	3,542,360	4	7

(2.) *Resolved,* That the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have temporarily authorised the application, in reduction of the net charge on Exchequer Grants for certain Navy Services, of the whole of the sums received in excess of the estimated Appropriations in Aid, in respect of the same Services; and have also temporarily authorised the application of the said total surpluses on certain Grants for Navy Services towards meeting the said total deficits on other Grants for Navy Services.

(3.) *Resolved,* That the application of such sums be sanctioned.

SCHEDULE.

Number of Vote.	Navy Services, 1885-6, Votes.	Gross Expenditure. Excesses of Actual over Estimated Gross Expenditure. 1.	Gross Expenditure. Surpluses of Estimated over Actual Gross Expenditure. 2.	Appropriations in Aid. Deficiencies of Actual as comprd. with Estimated Receipts. 3.	Appropriations in Aid. Surpluses of Actual as comprd. with Estimated Receipts. 4.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1 ..	Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines ..	106,454 15 7	..	44 16 9	
2 ..	Victuals and Clothing for ditto	83,251 11 0	..	..	242 2 8
3 ..	Admiralty Office ..	3,234 14 3	..	..	10 14 7
4 ..	Coast Guard Service and Naval Reserves, &c...	..	12,634 18 11	..	111 0 2
5 ..	Scientific Branch ..	783 3 6	..	..	2,037 10 9
6 ..	Dockyards and Naval Yards at Home and Abroad	98,047 2 10	..	255 11 2	
7 ..	Victualling Yards, &c...	3,403 12 0	..	..	106 10 1
8 ..	Medical Establishments, &c.	769 3 5	..	25 5 8	
9 ..	Marine Divisions ..	..	925 14 1	22 15 4	
10 Sec. 1 ..	Naval Stores	610,886 17 10	..	..	82,481 1 7
Sec. 2 ..	Machinery, Ships built by Contract, &c. ..	1,429,387 10 9	..	..	13,060 6 5
11 ..	New Works, Buildings, Yard Machinery, &c.	..	3,990 7 4	1,252 17 6	
12 ..	Medicines and Medical Stores	8,882 11 11	..	697 4 2	
13 ..	Martial Law, &c. ..	..	1,015 5 2	..	19 4 0
14 ..	Miscellaneous Services..	32,049 13 8	..	1,308 5 2	
15 ..	Half Pay, &c. ..	..	13,169 3 7	..	39 18 2
16 Sec. 1 ..	Military Pensions and Allowances.. ..	..	11,668 19 4	..	5 11 1
Sec. 2 ..	Civil Pensions and Allowances	302 12 1	..	58 0 6	
17 ..	Army Department—Conveyance of Troops ..	1,266,141 19 7	..	..	8,108 8 2
	Amount written off as irrecoverable ..	1,167 19 9			
		3,644,763 8 2	43,404 8 5	3,664 16 3	106,222 7 8

Net Deficit, £3,601,358 19 9 Net Surplus, £102,557 11 5

Total Deficit to be £3,498,801 8*s.* 4*d.*

Met out of the Vote of Credit for Naval and Military Operations.

(4.) *Resolved,* That it appears by the Army Appropriation Account for the year ended the 31st day of March 1886, and the statement appended thereto, as follows, viz. :—

(a.) That the gross expenditure for certain Army Services exceeded the estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £6,165,137 5*s.* 7*d.*, as shown in Column No. 1 of the Schedule hereto appended; while the gross expenditure for other Army Services fell short of the Estimate of such expenditure by a total sum of £129,190 1*s.* 2*d.*, as shown in Column No. 2 of the said appended Schedule; so that the gross actual expenditure for the whole of the Army Services exceeded the gross estimated expenditure by the net sum of £6,035,947 4*s.* 5*d.*;

(b.) That the receipts in aid of certain Army Services fell short of the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £20,749 3*s.* 10*d.*, as shown in Column No. 3 of the said appended Schedule; while the receipts in aid of other Army Services exceeded the estimate of such receipts by a total sum of £327,410 11*s.*, as shown in Column No. 4 of the said appended Schedule; so that the total actual receipts in aid of the Grants for Army Services exceeded the total estimated receipts by the net sum of £306,661 7*s.* 2*d.*;

(c.) That the resulting differences between the Exchequer Grants for Army Services and the net expenditure are as follows, viz. :—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Total Surpluses ...	136,332	8	9
Total Deficits ...	5,865,618	6	0

(5.) *Resolved,* That the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have temporarily authorised the application, in reduction of the net charge on Exchequer Grants for certain Army Services, of the whole of the sums received in excess of the estimated appropriations in aid, in respect of the same Services, and have also temporarily authorised the application of the said total surpluses on certain Grants for Army Services towards meeting the said total deficits on other Grants for Army Services.

(6.) *Resolved,* That the application of such sums be sanctioned.

SCHEDULE.

No. of Vote.	Army Services, 1885-6, Votes.	Gross Expenditure.		Appropriations in Aid.	
		Excesses of Actual over Estimated Gross Expenditure. 1.	Surpluses of Estimated over Actual Gross Expenditure. 2.	Deficiencies of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts. 3.	Surpluses of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts. 4.
		£ *s.* *d.*	£ *s.* *d.*	£ *s.* *d.*	£ *s.* *d.*
1	Pay of the General Staff, Regimental Pay, &c. ..	747,340 15 10	..	..	266,666 19 10
2	Divine Service	5,261 1 9	..	17 9 7	
3	Administration of Military Law..	..	1,058 12 5	..	146 18 9
4	Medical Establishments and Services	45,076 10 9	..	112 17 0	
5	Militia Pay and Allowances	66,452 9 2	..	1,110 19 11	
6	Yeomanry Cavalry Pay and Allowances ..	4,991 14 8	..	..	17 7 10
7	Volunteer Corps Pay and Allowances	..	1,144 18 10	176 5 6	
8	Army Reserve Force Pay and Allowances ..	..	41,438 7 9	..	89 19 7
9	Commissariat, Transport, and Ordnance Store Establishments	349,722 12 11	..	..	2,735 18 8
10	Provisions, Forage, Fuel, Transport, and other Services	1,447,094 18 6	..	..	47,096 19 8
11	Clothing Establishments, Services, and Supplies..	325,198 19 9	..	3,814 6 4	
	Carried forward	2,991,139 3 4	43,641 19 0	5,213 18 4	316,754 4 4

SCHEDULE—*continued.*

No. of Vote.	Army Services, 1885-6, Votes.	Gross Expenditure.		Appropriations in Aid.	
		Excesses of Actual over Estimated Gross Expenditure. 1.	Surpluses of Estimated over Actual Gross Expenditure. 2.	Deficiencies of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts. 3.	Surpluses of Actual as compared with Estimated Receipts. 4.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	Brought forward ..	2,991,139 3 4	43,641 19 0	5,231 18 4	316,754 4 4
12	Supply, Manufacture, and Repair of Warlike and other Stores	2,327,461 4 10	..	2,622 15 0	
13	Works, Buildings, and Repairs at Home and Abroad	809,358 4 6	..	6,840 9 5	
14	Establishments for Military Education	..	3,925 2 3	..	9,207 15 11
15	Miscellaneous Effective Services	8,123 5 2	..	2,642 16 7	
16	Salaries and Miscellaneous Charges of the War Office	11,440 15 1	..	28 4 0	
17	Rewards for Distinguished Services	2,974 10 9	..	39 8 7	
18	Half Pay	..	17,235 3 5	..	696 4 9
19	Retired Pay, &c. ..	..	32,232 8 0	..	357 5 11
20	Widows' Pensions ..	10,853 5 3	..	69 0 0	
21	Pensions for Wounds ..	2,867 16 3	..		300 0 0
22	Chelsea and Kilmainham Hospitals	..	59 2 10	..	95 0 1
23	Out-Pensions	..	26,019 5 2	3,216 18 11	
24	Superannuation Allowances	..	5,018 5 9	57 13 0	
25	Militia, Yeomanry Cavalry, and Volunteer Corps, Retired Pay	..	1,058 14 9		
	Balance irrecoverable	919 0 5			
		6,165,137 5 7	129,190 1 2	20,749 3 10	327,410 11 0
		Net Deficit, £6,035,947 4 5		Net Surplus, £306,661 7 2	

Total Deficit, £5,729,285 17 3,
to be met out of the Vote of Credit for Naval and Military Operations.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I think we have a right to ask Her Majesty Government for some reason why it appears by the Navy Appropriation Account that there is this enormous excess over the original amount of the estimated expenditure. The general method of looking after the expenditure of taxes in this House is about as loose and slipshod as anything can be, and therefore I say we ought to have an explanation of the reason for our being asked to agree to this lengthy Resolution.

THE SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. JACKSON) (Leeds, N.): This Resolution merely asks for the formal sanction of Parliament to the application of certain sums the temporary application of which has been sanctioned by the Treasury. It is also a question of sanctioning the transfer and appropriation to certain Services of surpluses which have arisen under Votes granted for other Services, a practice which hon. Members will be aware is allowed in the case of the Army and Navy, but which is not permitted in the case of the Civil Service. It is merely a transfer of the saving on one Vote to the deficit on another, for which the Treasury asks the formal sanction of Parliament.

MR. CONYBEARE: I do not want to oppose the Resolution, and I am perfectly certain it would be of no use if I were to do so. I simply express my opinion that this is a most unsatisfactory way of doing the business of the country, and at the same time the hope that the time is not far distant when we shall know more about these matters.

MR. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): The hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury has stated that this is a Motion for the purpose of transferring the surplus arising on one Vote to reduce the deficit occurring on another. But there appears to have been a deficit in every case, and I must therefore ask for some further explanation from the hon. Gentleman.

MR. JACKSON: I would point out to the hon. Gentleman that the money provided by Parliament in the present case comes from a Vote of Credit, which, as the hon. Gentleman will know, is quite different from an ordinary Vote on the Estimates, inasmuch as it is administered by the Treasury.

MR. CLANCY: Is this the usual thing?

MR. JACKSON: No.

MR. CLANCY: My impression was that there was a pledge given at the end of last Session that this sort of thing would not occur again.

MR. JACKSON: There seems that there has been a very large amount of what is called the war scare. These sums were paid out of the Vote of Credit, and were sanctioned by the Treasury.

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W): Members of the Committee are very disagreeably struck, after having heard the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury say that this is a matter merely for devoting surpluses for the payment of deficits, to hear that the surpluses were £40,000, where the deficits amounted to £3,500,000 in one case, and that whilst in the other case the surplus amounted to £306,000 the deficit amounts to over £6,000,000. I should like to ask whether the amount set out in the first of these columns has been covered by the Vote on Account?

MR. JACKSON: Certainly.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

VACANT GROUNDS (NUISANCES PREVENTION) BILL.—(BILL 388.)

(*Mr. Lawson, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Howell, Mr. James Rowlands.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. J. ROWLANDS (Finsbury, E): I am sorry that I have to trouble the House at this early hour of the morning (3.50 a.m.) about this Bill; but I had hoped that the Government would have been able to accept it, without its being necessary to offer any explanation. I hope, under any circumstances, they will be able to accept it. It is merely an Amending Bill of some of the existing Acts of Parliament, and I believe that if they had been worked strictly, instead of being worked in a lax manner, it would have been possible to grapple with the case this measure is particularly intended to meet. I believe that if there is one subject more than another which has created a great deal of feeling in this House it is the subject of burial grounds. Hon. Members on all sides of the House have taken an interest in it, and all are most anxious that these places should not only not be desecrated, but should be properly respected. Now, for some considerable time, as is known to a great many persons, a great scandal has been taking place in the north-west of London in connection with a burial ground in Tottenham Court Road. I believe the owners of the burial ground got into some financial difficulties, and disassociated it from the Whitfield Tabernacle, and it fell into the hands of a speculative gentleman, who has tried to build on the ground. He commenced removing the remains of persons who had been interred, and he had to be prevented doing that. When he found it was impossible to build on the ground he seems to have taken other action, not out of disrespect to the ground, but for the benefit of the Whitfield Tabernacle. He then let it to someone who uses it for the holding of fairs. I ask can anyone look without outraged feelings at the fact that one of these burial places, consecrated not in the sense that burial grounds are consecrated in the Church of England, but by the remains of the ancestors of the people living in the locality, and which must be sacred to those relatives who remain, is being utilized for the purpose of merrymaking and for the holding of a fair. A relative of a person buried in this ground came to me to-day, and asked me to try and do my best to get this nuisance removed. As I say, there is an ordinary public fair going on upon this burial ground; there are rifle shooting galleries and all the rest of the nuisances—admitted nuisances to everyone living in the neighbourhood—which usually attend these fairs in crowded neighbourhoods. The inhabitants of the district have no means of preventing the nuisance, consequently this little Bill is brought in to grapple, if possible, with the difficulty. I am prepared to accept any Amendment the Government may think necessary, in order, if the Bill is not workable, to render it workable. I ask the Government sincerely, if they possibly can, to help us to get this Bill through, and to stop this grave scandal which, I believe, the police authorities have tried to put a stop to; but, if refused, it is powerless to prevent. An injunction has been obtained against the proprietor or lessee of the ground; but it only applies for one hour during the week while service is going on in the Whitfield Tabernacle on a Wednesday evening.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. J. Rowlands,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

COPYHOLD ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL

[*Lords.*]—[Bill 359.]

(*Mr. Haldane.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 1st September.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 *agreed to.*

Clause 2 (All may be admitted by attorney.)

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin Co., N.): I submit that this is no hour to go on with this Bill, especially considering that the Municipal Regulation (Constabulary, &c.) (Belfast) Bill has been postponed for another Session, because there is no time to consider it. It is ridiculous to proceed with a Bill like this, to which there may be great opposition. I beg leave to move that the Chairman report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Clancy.*)

Mr. ELTON (Somerset, Wellington): I hope the hon. Gentleman the Member for North Dublin will remember that this Bill is a Bill which has been through Committee and through the House for the last four or five years. There is hardly a word in it which has not been settled by the Land Commissioners, who have contributed every necessary Amendment. The measure does not affect Ireland in any way; but in some of the most populated parts of this country it will produce the removal of a great grievance which has been felt for a great many years. It is not a compulsory Bill, as hon. Members are aware, but a permissive one, and its effect will be to alleviate the condition of Lancashire copyholds and to make the enfranchisement of other copyholds easier.

Mr. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): My hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin has pointed out that on the Motion of the Government this morning a very important Bill urgently required concerning the public peace of a part of the United Kingdom has been withdrawn, and the order for it discharged, because there is not time to deal with it this Session, and that in spite of the fact that it was not opposed. That is a strong argument for the same course being taken here. This may be a simple Bill; but, Sir, I notice that you called out the names of several Gentlemen who have Amendments on the Paper, and that no one responded. These hon. Members are not present, and to take the Bill in their absence will probably be to risk passing the measure in an imperfect form.

Mr. ELTON: I have the authority of the hon. Members for the withdrawal of their Amendments.

MR. SEXTON: To proceed with a Bill of this kind, in the absence of hon. Gentleman who have Amendments on the Paper, certainly does not seem to me like legislation. I hope my hon. Friend will press his Motion.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I would point out that this Bill has come from the other House. In the case of the Belfast Bill, to which hon. Members opposite refer, it was a measure which originated in this House, and which, therefore, would have to be sent to the other House after it passes through all its stages here. Obviously there would not have been time to pass the measure through both Houses.

MR. CLANCY: The fact of a Bill having come down from the other House is no argument with me in favour of such a Bill, and the fact that a Bill is approved of by the Land Commissioners is likewise no argument with me in its support. I remember making an inquiry last year with regard to those Land Commissioners, and the result of the inquiry was to make me distrust everything which comes down from them. It is ridiculous to be proceeding with such a question as this at 4 o'clock in the morning.

MR. CONYBEARE (Cornwall, Camborne): I should not desire to oppose this Bill under ordinary circumstances. It is in charge of an hon. and learned Friend of mine on the opposite Benches (Mr. Elton). He is now responsible for the measure; but I believe it is much more the legislative offspring of the hon. and learned Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane) who sits on the other side of the House—I know, at any rate, that that hon. Member takes great interest in the matter. I should be the last person myself to oppose the Bill under ordinary circumstances; but considering the hour of the morning, I think the Motion my hon. Friend the Member for North Dublin has made is only a reasonable one, and I support his proposal that the Chairman report Progress and ask leave to sit again. I think it would be a higher principle than going on with this Bill to refuse to deal with such a proposal at this unseemly hour. I think it would be a higher principle to take that course than to support a Bill merely because it is introduced by a personal Friend of one's own. I think the argument advanced by my hon. Friends on these Benches is strictly pertinent. If there is no time to go on with an important Bill, such as the Belfast Constabulary Bill, I do not see that we have any call to go on with this measure at this hour. As to what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that the Government were pledged to carrying the Belfast Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order!

MR. CONYBEARE: The argument that the two Bills are not on a parity is not a matter deserving of consideration. The right hon. Gentleman would have found it perfectly possible to have got rid of the opposition to the Belfast Bill if he had wished to do so. Under the circumstances I shall support my hon. Friend.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 10; Noes 85: Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 468.) [4.5 A.M.]

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 3 *agreed to.*

Clause 4 (Lord to retain his right in case of escheat).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

MR. HALLEY STEWART (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to move, Sir, that you do now leave the Chair. I protest against legislating on a matter of this kind at 10 minutes past 4 o'clock in the morning.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Halley Stewart.*)

MR. CLANCY: May I ask the Government if they really intend to go on with this Bill of 19 pages at this hour of the morning? I ask the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill does he really expect the Committee to have any intelligent knowledge of what it is doing?

MR. ELTON: If the hon. Gentleman will allow the Bill to go on until there is opposition to the clauses, I shall be content then to move that Progress be reported. Most of the Amendments on he Paper are withdrawn.

The Committee proceeded to a Division, and the CHAIRMAN stated he thought the Noes had it, and his decision being challenged, he directed the Ayes to stand up in their places, and thirteen Members only having stood up, the CHAIRMAN declared the Noes had it.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. CONYBEARE: Before the clause passes I think it is desirable to make some observations upon it. This is a Bill which extends over something like 20 pages. There is a separate Paper containing a large number of Amendments. It is most ridiculous to ask us to proceed with such a Bill at this hour (4.15) of the morning. Some of the Amendments——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must speak to the clause.

MR. CONYBEARE: All I have to say about this particular clause is that I have a very strong objection to it standing part of the Bill. If it is pressed we shall divide against it.

MR. SEXTON: I notice there is an Amendment upon the Paper in the name of the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland (Mr. J. W. Lowther) to the effect that the clause should be omitted from the Bill. I think the onus lies with the promoters of the Bill to prove why the clause should remain.

MR. ELTON: I have great pleasure in answering what the hon. Member has asked me. At first sight it looks as if some privilege were going to be given to the lord of the manor; but this clause is really designed to prevent compensation being given to the lord of the manor under the name of compensation for right to escheat. It was considered that this compensation might very properly be abolished for this reason, that notwithstanding that the landlord was compensated for the right to escheat when the land was turned into freehold, the right to escheat remained. Under these circumstances, it was considered by the persons who introduced this clause that it would be a distinct benefit, and facilitate the enfranchisement of copyhold, to do away with the right to compensation.

Original Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 82; Noes 12: Majority 70.—(Div. List, No. 469).

Clause 5 *agreed to*.

Clause 6 (Restraint on the creation of new copyholds).

MR. SEXTON (Belfast, W.): I notice there are two Amendments to this clause, one in the name of an hon. Member on the opposite side of the House—the Member for the Penrith Division of Cumberland (Mr. J. W. Lowther)—and the other in the name of an hon. and learned Gentleman on this side of the House—the Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane). The Amendments are identical with each other, for they are to leave out all the words after the word "lands," in line 20, to end of the clause. I think an Amendment proposed on both sides of the House must be a very good one. I therefore beg to move it.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 20, after "lands," leave out to end of Clause.—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

MR. ELTON: The hon. and learned Member for Haddington (Mr. Haldane), whose Amendment stands first on the Paper, wishes to withdraw it.

MR. SEXTON: Is that all the hon. and learned Gentleman wishes to vouchsafe to the Committee?

MR. ELTON: It is proposed that the new copyholds in future shall not be created without the previous consent of the Land Commissioners.

MR. SEXTON: That is very satisfactory.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Clause *agreed to*.

Clauses 7 to 10, inclusive, severally *agreed to*.

Clause 11 (Amendment of Section 6 of 21 & 22 *Vict.* c. 94).

Committee report Progress; to sit again *To-morrow*.

EAST INDIA (REVENUE ACCOUNTS).

Ordered, That the several Accounts and Papers which have been presented to the House in this Session of Parliament, relating to the Revenues of India, be referred to the consideration of a Committee of the whole House.

Resolved, That this House will this day resolve itself into the said Committee.—(*Mr. Jackson.*)

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. W. H. SMITH) (Strand, Westminster): I wish to say that in accordance with the usual practice, when Supply is closed, and in order that we may not sit quite so late, the House will meet at 3 o'clock.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House adjourned at half after Four o'clock in the morning.

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When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

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Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Dillon*); after debate, Question put; A. 61, N. 97; M. 36 (D. L. 440) [7.20 P.M.]

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Ireland—Irish National League (*Special Proclamation*)

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [25th August],

"That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, humbly to represent to Her Majesty that there has been laid before this House a Special Proclamation of the Viceroy of Ireland, declaring the Association known as the Irish National League to be a dangerous Association, under 'The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887.'

"That no information has been furnished to Parliament to justify the issue of the said Special Proclamation, by virtue of which Her Majesty's subjects are liable to be punished as criminals without judicial inquiry into the nature of their acts.

"And, that this House, in the absence of such information, prays that the said Proclamation shall not continue in force as to the Association named and described therein" (*Mr. Gladstone*)

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Sept 1—Ailwyn Edward Fellowes, esquire (*County of Huntingdon* (*Northern or Ramsey Division*)

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Coal Mines, &c. Regulation, Consid. *cl.* 12, 1100; Amendt. 1104; *cl.* 18, 1108; *cl.* 49, Amendt. 1115

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Peru—The Peruvian Bondholders

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PICKARD, Mr. B., *York, W.R., Normanton*

Coal Mines, &c. Regulation, Consid. *add. cl.* 1090, 1094; *cl.* 12, 1104; *cl.* 13, 1106; *cl.* 24, 1109; *cl.* 43, Amendt. 1110; *cl.* 45, Amendt. 1111; *cl.* 47, Amendt. *ib.* 1112; *cl.* 49, 1119; *cl.* 25, Amendt. 1120, 1124

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(*The Marquess of Lothian*)
l. Read 2ª *Aug* 26, 1 (No. 241)
Committee *; Report *Aug* 30
Read 3ª * *Sept* 6

Sheriffs (Consolidation) Bill [H.L.]
(*Mr. Solicitor General*) [Bill 262]
c. Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *Sept* 5, 1332; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Conybeare*); Question put; A. 25, N. 79; M. 54 (D.L. 455) [4.5 A.M.]
Original Question again proposed; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Sexton*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Original Question again proposed; Debate adjourned

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c. Ordered; read 1° * *Aug* 26 [Bill 386]

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Superannuation Acts Amendment Bill
(*Mr. Jackson, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*)
c. Read 2°, after short debate *Sept* 8, 1810 [Bill 354]

Supply—Civil Service Estimates—Class III.—Law and Justice—"Criminal Prosecutions, Repayments to Counties and Boroughs"
Question, Mr. Pickersgill; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Sept* 8, 1667

SUPPLY
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Considered in Committee *Aug* 30, 473—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS, Vote 35
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Considered in Committee *Aug* 31, 636—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS, Votes 36, 37, 40 to 42
Resolutions reported *Sept* 1
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Resolutions reported *Sept* 2, 1065
First 5 agreed to
Res. 6; after short debate, Amendt. to leave out "£114,662," insert £111,662," (*Mr. Jackson*); Amendt. agreed to; Resolution, as amended, agreed to
Considered in Committee *Sept* 2, 922—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES; CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE, Votes 21 to 23, 25, 27, 29, 31, 32
Resolutions reported *Sept* 3, 1125
First Res. postponed; subsequent Res. agreed to
Postponed Res. again read *Sept* 6, 1511
Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Res.;" after short debate, Question put; A. 114, N. 15; M. 99 (D.L. 462)
Considered in Committee *Sept* 5, 1146—CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES—CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE, Vote 28; CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART, Votes 13 to 18; CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES, Votes 5, 6, 8; CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Vote 24; CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS, Public Works and Industries (Ireland) (Special Grant).
Resolutions reported *Sept* 6, 1504
First 11 agreed to
Res. 12; Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution;" after short debate, Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. W. H. Smith*); Question put accordingly; A. 116, N. 16; M. 100 (D. L. 460)
Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution;" A. 115, N. 16; M. 99 (D. L. 461)
Considered in Committee *Sept* 6, 1365—CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Votes 21, 22; CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART, Votes 10 to 12; CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES, Votes 5, 6, 8; CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES, Votes 1 to 4, 7, 8; CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS, Votes 1. 2; REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, Votes I, II; CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS, Vote 7; CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART, Victoria University; CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS, Repayment to Civil Contingencies Fund.
Resolutions reported *Sept* 8, 1770
First 8 agreed to
Res. 9; Amendt. to leave out "£246,082," insert "£246,023" (*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*); Question proposed, "That '£246,082'

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Supply—*cont.*
stand part of the Resolution;" after short debate, Question put; A. 109, N. 25; M. 84 [12.15 P.M.]
Div. List, A. and N., 1784
Res. agreed to
Res. 10 to 17 agreed to
Res. 18; Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution," 1785; after short debate, Amendt. to leave out "£651,848," insert "£651,815" (*Mr. Pickersgill*); Question proposed, "That '£651,848,' stand part of the Resolution;" after further short debate, Question put; A. 110, N. 17; M. 93 (D. L. 466) [1.10 A.M.]
Res. agreed to
Res. 19; after short debate, Res. agreed to
Res. 20 to 22 agreed to
Res. 23; Moved, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution," 1808
Amendt. to leave out "£6,069," insert "£5,969" (*Mr. Sexton*); Question proposed, "That '£6,069' stand part of the Resolution;" after short debate, Amendt. withdrawn; Res. agreed to
Considered in Committee *Sept* 7, 1534—Navy Estimates, Votes 10, 10A, 3 to 5
Resolutions reported *Sept* 8, 1770
First 3 agreed to
Res. 4; after short debate, Res. agreed to
Remaining Res. agreed to
Considered in Committee *Sept* 8, 1674—Navy Estimates; Army Estimates, Votes 6 to 9; 11 to 15; 17 and 18; and 20 to 26

Sutherland, Mr. A., *Sutherland*
Supply—Colonial Local Revenue, &c. 1421
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Sutherland, Mr. T., *Greenock*
Egypt—Light Dues on British Shipping, 731

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Wales — Tithe Agitation — Attack on the Residence of the Rev. Canon Browne, Bodfair, 270

Swinburne, Sir J., *Staffordshire, Lichfield*
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Talbot, Mr. J. G., *Oxford University*
Tithe — Commutation and Redemption—A Royal Commission — Collection of Tithe Rent-Charge, 1669

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Irish Reproductive Loan Fund—Refusal of Loans to Fishermen in Ballycotton, Co. Cork, 1135
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Ireland—Post Office—Questions
Cork and Macroom Railway Company—Contract for Conveyance of Mails, 1340
Greenwich Time Gun at Cork, 1663
Postal Communication between Macroom and Cork, 454
Labourers' Allotments, Comm. *cl.* 12, 245, 246, 248; Consid. *add. cl.* 1291
Local Government Boundaries, 2R. 427, 428
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Navy Estimates—Admiralty Office, Amendt. 1602, 1606, 1607
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Criminal Prosecutions, &c. in Ireland, 951, 956
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Royal University (Ireland) Buildings, 1270, 1271
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Tramways (War Department), Comm. 439; *cl.* 4, 634
United States—Seizure of British Fishing Vessels in Behring's Straits, 1134
War Office — Regimental Bands at Public Meetings, 1351

Technical Schools (Scotland) Bill
(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland, Sir Herbert Maxwell*)
c. Committee—R.P. *Aug* 29, 429 [Bill 358]
Committee—R.P. *Sept* 5, 1332
Question, Mr. Mason; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Sept* 7, 1622
Committee; Report *Sept* 8, 1817

TEMPLE, Sir R., *Worcester, Evesham*
Coal Mines, &c. Regulation, Consid. *cl.* 47, Amendt. 1112, 1113
Criminal Law—Confession of Israel Lipski, 1071
Prisons (England and Wales)—Lady Visitors to Female Prisoners, 1654
Supply—Customs, 1487
Report, 1783

Temporary Dwellings (*re-committed*) **Bill**
(*Mr. Elton, Mr. Burt, Mr. Caine, Mr. Matthew Kenny, Colonel Makins*)
c. Bill withdrawn * *Sept* 8 [Bill 370]

Thames Conservancy Board, The—Representation in this House
Question, Mr. Gedge; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Sept* 8, 1651

Theatres — Official Surveys—Burning of the Exeter Theatre
Questions, Sir John Puleston, Dr. Tanner; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Sept* 6, 1360

Tithe
Commutation and Redemption of Tithe—A Royal Commission — Collection of Tithe Rent-Charge, Questions, Mr. H. Gardner, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Sept* 8, 1669
Tithe Commutation Acts—Incidence of Charge, Question, Mr. Howell; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Sept* 6, 1359

TOMLINSON, Mr. W. E. M., *Preston*
Coal Mines, &c. Regulation, Consid. *add. cl.* 1086; *cl.* 12, 1102; *cl.* 24, Amendt. 1108, 1109; *cl.* 34, Amendt. *ib.*; *cl.* 49, 1119; Amendt. 1120; *cl.* 25, Amendt. 1123
Labourers' Allotments, Consid. *add. cl.* 1284
Parliament—Course of Business, 749

Trade and Commerce—The Treaty of Commerce with Spain—An Arbitration Clause
Question, Mr. Samuelson; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Aug* 30, 447

Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Acts Amendment Bill
(*Colonel Nolan, Mr. James O'Brien, Mr. Foley, Mr. Sheehy*)
c. Order for Committee read; Moved, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair" *Aug* 27, 251; Moved, "That the Question be now put" (*Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien*); Question put accordingly; A. 80, N. 13; M. 67 (D. L. 430) [5.40 P.M.] [Bill 252]
The Question was not decided in the affirmative, because it was not supported by the majority prescribed by the Standing Order of the 18th March, 1887
Original Question again proposed; Debate adjourned

Tramways (War Department) Bill
(*Mr. Northcote, Mr. Edward Stanhope, Mr. Brodrick*)
c. Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [3rd August], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair; Question again proposed; Debate resumed *Aug* 29, 439 [Bill 246]
Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. M. J. Kenny*); after short debate, Question put; A. 20, N. 63; M. 43 (D.L. 434) [3.40 A.M.]
Original Question again proposed, 441; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Dillwyn*); Motion withdrawn; Debate adjourned
Debate resumed *Aug* 30, 634; Question put, and agreed to; Committee; Report
Considered *; read 3° *Sept* 1
l. Read 1ª * (*L. Harris*) *Sept* 6 (No. 255)
Read 2ª * *Sept* 7
Committee; Report *Sept* 8, 1634

TREASURY—First Lord (*see* SMITH, Right Hon. W. H.)

TREASURY—Secretary to (*see* JACKSON, Mr. W. L.)

TREVELYAN, Right Hon. Sir G. O., *Glasgow, Bridgeton*
Irish National League (Special Proclamation), Motion for an Address, 33, 35, 39

Trinidad and Tobago Bill [H.L.]
(*Sir Henry Holland*)
c. Committee * ; Report *Aug* 31 [Bill 368]
Considered * ; read 3° *Sept* 1

Truck Bill (*The Lord Macnaghten*)
l. Commons' Amendts. to one of the Lords' Amendts., and Reasons for disagreeing to certain of the Lords' Amendts., and Commons' consequential Amendt. considered *Sept* 7, 1532 (No. 179)
Commons' Amendts. agreed to ; certain of the Amendts. to which the Commons have disagreed not insisted on ; some insisted on, and a consequential Amendt. made to the Bill ; a Committee appointed to prepare Reasons to be offered to the Commons for the Lords insisting on certain of their Amendts. ; the Committee to meet forthwith
Report from the Committee of the Reasons to be offered to the Commons for the Lords insisting on certain of their Amendts. ; read, and agreed to ; and a message sent to the Commons to return the said Bill with an Amendt. and Reasons

Truck Bill—The Wage Clauses
Questions, Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Sexton ; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Sept* 8, 1672

Trustee Savings Banks Bill
(*The Lord Elphinstone*)
l. Report * *Aug* 26 (No. 245)
Read 3° * *Aug* 30 (No. 250)

TUITE, Mr. J., *Westmeath, N.*
Ireland—Questions
Criminal Law and Procedure Act, 1887—Prosecution of Mr. John Hayden, 919, 1145
Horse Breeding—Winners at the Royal Dublin Society's Show, 1355
Magistracy—Major Traill, R.M. 11, 12, 13
Post Office—Day Mails from Drumsna, 1356
Supply—Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, 1248
County Court Officers, &c. in Ireland, 1190, 1211
Criminal Prosecutions, &c. in Ireland, 977, 978, 979, 986 ; Amendt. 997, 1004, 1009
Local Government Board in Ireland, &c. 798
Public Buildings, Ireland, 896
War Office—Army Pensions—Royal Warrants, 1881-2, 454

TYLER, Sir H. W., *Great Yarmouth*
Dominion of Canada—Manitoba Railway, 273

Ulster Canal and Tyrone Navigation Bill (*Mr. Jackson, Colonel King-Harman, Sir Herbert Maxwell*)
c. Bill withdrawn * *Sept* 2 [Bill 313]

United States
Pauper Emigrants from Ireland, Questions, Mr. T. M. Healy ; Answers, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Sept* 2, 916
Refusal of Destitute Aliens, Question, Captain Colomb ; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Sept* 6, 1336 [See title *Emigration*]
Seizure of British Fishing Vessels in Behring's Straits, Question, Dr. Tanner ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Sept* 5, 1134 [See title *Canada*]

Vacant Grounds (Nuisances Prevention) Bill (*Mr. Lawson, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Howell, Mr. James Rowlands*)
c. Ordered ; read 1° * *Sept* 5 [Bill 388]
Read 2° *Sept* 8, 1842

Venezuela—Outrages on British Subjects and Shipping—The "Henrietta" and "Josephine"
Question, Mr. Kimber ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir James Fergusson) *Sept* 8, 1661

VINCENT, Mr. C. E. H., *Sheffield, Central*
Asia (Central)—Afghanistan—Anglo-Russian Boundary Treaty, 452

Wales
Fisheries—Harbours of Refuge on the Welsh Coast, Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis ; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (Baron Henry De Worms) *Sept* 1, 743
Intermediate Education—Legislation, Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis ; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Aug* 26, 27
THE TITHE AGITATION
Attack on the Residence of the Rev. Canon Browne, Bodfair, Question, Mr. Swetenham ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Aug* 29, 270 ; Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Aug* 30, 461
The Report of the Commissioner, Questions, Mr. Byron Reed, Mr. T. E. Ellis ; Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Aug* 30, 453 ;—*Government Publications in the Welsh Language*, Question, Mr. T. E. Ellis ; Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Matthews) *Aug* 30, 461

War Department—see *Army*

WAR DEPARTMENT—Secretary of State (*see* STANHOPE, Right Hon. E.)

WAR DEPARTMENT—Under Secretary of State (*see* HARRIS, Lord)

WAR DEPARTMENT—Financial Secretary (*see* BRODRICK, Hon. W. St. J. F.)

WATKIN, Sir E. W., *Hythe*
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War Office (Adjutant General's Department)—Regimental Bands at Political Meetings, 1127

WATT, Mr. H., *Glasgow, Camlachie*
Civil List Pensions—Mr. Mongredien and Mr. Richard Jefferies, 263
Railways—State Acquisition of Trunk Lines, 904
Revenue—Review of Taxation, 469

WAYS AND MEANS (*Questions*)
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Adulteration of Food and Drink—Law in Foreign Countries, Question, Mr. Kimber; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Aug* 29, 254
Mr. Foley, Lessee of the Cork Custom House, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Aug* 29, 265
Seizure of Tobacco on Board the "City of Bristol" at Belfast, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Jackson) *Sept* 6, 1344
The Tobacco Duties—Excess of Moisture, Questions, Mr. Nolan, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Sept* 8, 1650

Inland Revenue Department—Assistants of Excise, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Goschen) *Sept* 8, 1653
The Revenue—Review of Taxation, Question, Mr. Watt; Answer, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. W. H. Smith) *Aug* 30, 469

WAYS AND MEANS
Order for Committee read; Moved, "That this House will, upon Monday next, resolve itself into the said Committee" *Aug* 26, 152; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. Henry H. Fowler*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn
Original Question put, and agreed to

WAYS AND MEANS
Moved, "That, towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1888, the sum of £34,242,209 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom" *Sept* 8, 1769; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to
Res. reported *Sept* 9

WEBSTER, Sir R. E. (Attorney General), *Isle of Wight*
Bankruptcy (Discharge and Closure), 2R. 429; Comm. *cl.* 5, Amendt. 1517

WEBSTER, Sir R. E.—*cont.*
Charity Commissioners (Officers), Comm. 628; *cl.* 2, 629, 630, 634; *cl.* 5, *ib.*; Consid. *add. cl.* 1067, 1070
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Deeds of Arrangement (No. 2), Comm. 1327; *cl.* 8, 1515, 1516; *cl.* 9, 1517
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Labourers' Allotments, Comm. *cl.* 5, 177, 179; *cl.* 6, 210, 211, 230; *cl.* 7, 237, 239, 240; *cl.* 9, 241; Consid. *add. cl.* 1295, 1308; *cl.* 2, 1315, 1316, 1318, 1319; *cl.* 3, 1321
Law and Justice (England and Wales)—Prosecution Expenses Act—Expenses of Witnesses in Criminal Cases, 456, 457
Law of Evidence Amendment, 2R. 428
Merchant Shipping (Miscellaneous), Comm. *cl.* 7, 1519; *cl.* 8, *ib.*
Sheriffs (Consolidation), Comm. 1328
Supply—Criminal Prosecutions, &c. in Ireland, 999

WEBSTER, Mr. R. G., *St. Pancras, E.*
Agricultural Department of the Privy Council—Injurious Insects Act—Colorado Beetle, 721
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Fires (Metropolis)—Fire at Whiteley's—Gas Pipes, 26
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War Office—Mobilization Scheme—Allocation of the Artillery Corps, 447

WILLIAMS, Mr. A. J., *Glamorgan, S.*
Coal Mines, &c. Regulation, Consid. *cl.* 49, 1115

WINCHILSEA AND NOTTINGHAM, Earl of
Labourers' Allotments, Comm. 1633

WINTERBOTHAM, Mr. A. B., *Gloucester, Cirencester*
Labourers' Allotments, Comm. *cl.* 5, 179; *cl.* 6, 226; Consid. *add. cl.* 1297; *cl.* 2, 1314

WOLMER, Viscount, *Hants, Petersfield*
Labourers' Allotments, Comm. *cl.* 6, 218; *cl.* 7, Amendt. 232, 233

Women's Suffrage Bill—A Point of Order
Question, Lord Denman; Answer, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) *Aug* 26, 2

Women's Suffrage (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Lord Denman*)
l. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª" *Aug* 30, 442; a Question being stated thereupon, the Question was put, Whether the said Question shall be now put? Resolved in the negative; short debate thereon
(No. 5)

Women's Suffrage (*No.* 2) *Bill*—cont.
Moved, "That the Bill be not further inserted in the list of Bills in progress printed with the Minutes of this House" (*The Duke of Buckingham and Chandos*) *Sept* 8, 1635; after short debate, Motion agreed to

WOODALL, Mr. W., *Hanley*
Army Estimates—War Office, 1714, 1724, 1730
Coal Mines, &c. Regulation, Consid. *cl.* 49, Amendt. 1115, 1118; *cl.* 25, Amendt. 1124
Navy Estimates—Extra Estimate for Services not Naval, 1706
Post Office—Circular Post, 1132
Technical Schools (Scotland), Comm. *cl.* 11, 1828, 1829

WORKS—First Commissioner (*see* PLUNKET, Right Hon. D. R.)

WORTLEY, Mr. C. B. STUART- (Under Secretary of State for the Home Department), *Sheffield, Hallam*
Coal Mines, &c. Regulation, Consid. *add. cl.* 1086
Law and Justice—Middlewich (Cheshire) Petty Sessions — Sentence on John M'Convent, 1128
Licensing Acts—Workington Licensing Magistrates, 1140

END OF VOLUME CCCXX., AND ELEVENTH VOLUME

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